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FICTION HOUSE MAGAZINES 52 Pages

A FICTION HOUSE MAGAZINE

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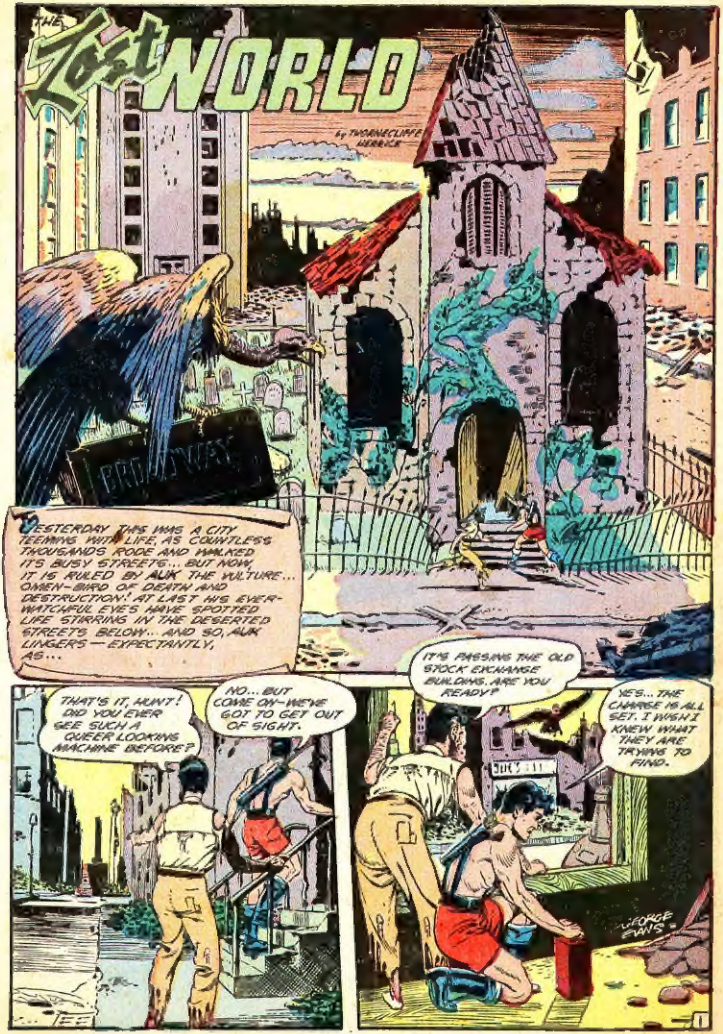
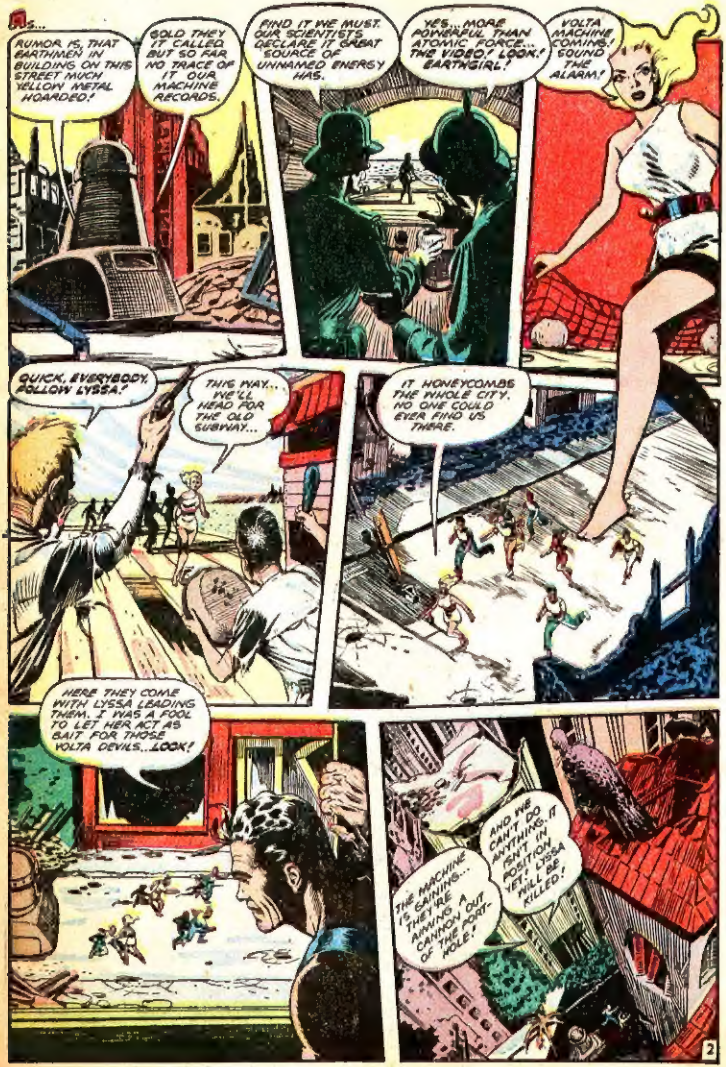
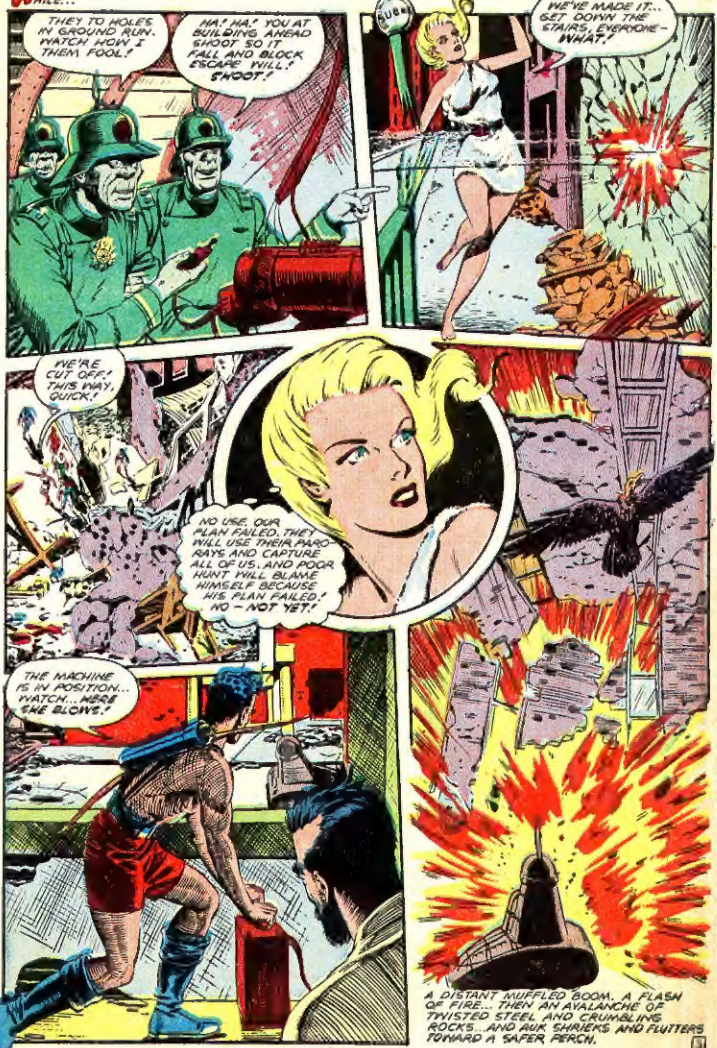
A.N.C.
PLANET
COMICS
No. 56
SEPT.
10¢
FICTION HOUSE MAGAZINES
52 Pages
The LOST WORLD
MYSTA OF THE MOON
STAR PIRATE

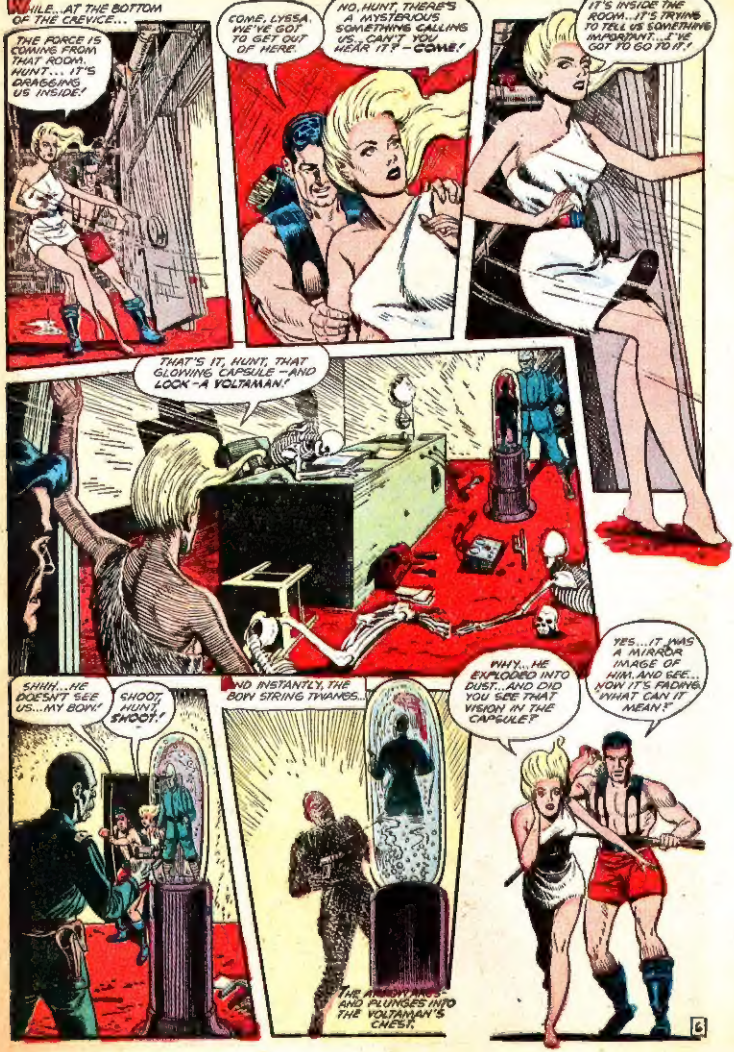

THE Lost WORLD
by THORNECLIFFE HERRICK
YESTERDAY THIS WAS A CITY TEEMING WITH LIFE, AS COUNTLESS THOUSANDS RODE AND WALKED ITS BUSY STREETS... BUT NOW, IT IS RULED BY AUK THE VULTURE... OMEN-BIRD OF DEATH AND DESTRUCTION! AT LAST HIS EVER-WATCHFUL EYES HAVE SPOTTED LIFE STIRRING IN THE DESERTED STREETS BELOW... AND SO, AUK LINGERS—EXPECTANTLY, AS...
THAT'S IT, HUNT! DID YOU EVER SEE SUCH A QUEER LOOKING MACHINE BEFORE?
NO... BUT COME ON—WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF SIGHT.
IT'S PASSING THE OLD STOCK EXCHANGE BUILDING. ARE YOU READY?
YES... THE CHARGE IS ALL SET. I WISH I KNEW WHAT THEY ARE TRYING TO FIND.
GEORGE EVANS

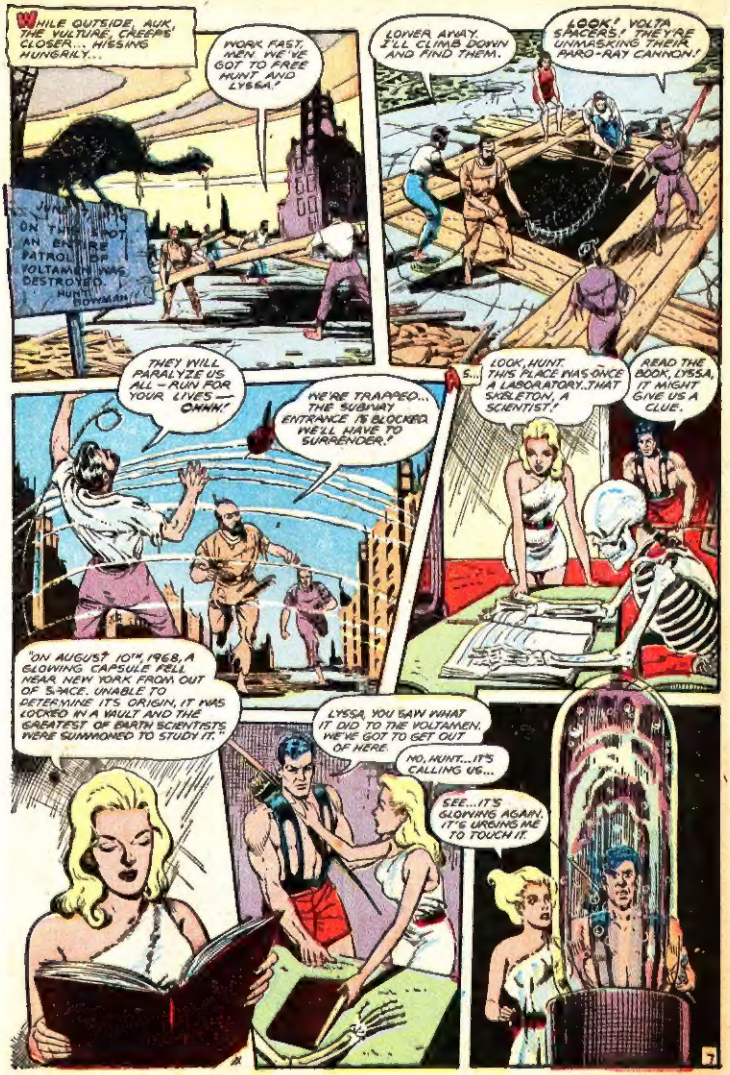

RUMOR IS, THAT EARTHMEN IN BUILDING ON THIS STREET MUCH YELLOW METAL HOARDED!
GOLD THEY'D CALLED, BUT SO FAR NO TRACE OF IT. OUR MACHINE RECORDS.
FIND IT WE MUST. OUR SCIENTISTS DECLARE IT GREAT SOURCE OF UNNAMED ENERGY HAS.
YES... MORE POWERFUL THAN ATOMIC FORCE... THE VIDEO, LOOK, EARTHGIRL!
VOLTA MACHINE COMING! SOUND THE ALARM!
QUICK, EVERYBODY, FOLLOW LYSSA!
THIS WAY... WE'LL HEAD FOR THE OLD SUBWAY...
IT HONEYCOMBS THE WHOLE CITY. NO ONE COULD EVER FIND US THERE.
HERE THEY COME WITH LYSSA LEADING THEM. I WAS A FOOL TO LET HER ACT AS BAIT FOR THOSE VOLTA DEVILS...LOOK!
THE MACHINE IS CANNING... THEY'RE AMMING CANNON OUT THE PORT-HOLE!
AND WE CAN'T DO ANYTHING. IF WE SHOOT IN POSITION YET, LYSSA WILL BE KILLED!


While...
THEY TO HOLES IN GROUND RUN. WATCH HOW I THEM FOOL!
HA! HA! YOU AT BUILDING AHEAD SHOOT SO IT FALL AND BLOCK ESCAPE WILL! SHOOT!
SUSH
WE'VE MADE IT... GET DOWN THE STAIRS, EVERYONE— WHAT!
WE'RE CUT OFF! THIS WAY, QUICK!
NO USE. OUR PLAN FAILED. THEY WILL USE THEIR PARO-RAYS AND CAPTURE ALL OF US. AND POOR HUNT WILL BLAME HIMSELF BECAUSE HIS PLAN FAILED! NO — NOT YET!
THE MACHINE IS IN POSITION... WATCH... HERE SHE BLOWS!
A DISTANT MUFFLED BOOM. A FLASH OF FIRE... THEN AN AVALANCHE OF TWISTED STEEL AND CRUMBLING ROCKS. AND AUK SHRIEKS AND FLUTTERS TOWARD A SAFER PERCH.

WE'VE WON! THE BUILDING SMASHED THE MACHINE AND KILLED EVERYONE IN IT! COME ON!
YOU'RE SAFE, LYSSA!... FOR A SECOND, I THOUGHT OUR TRAP HAD FAILED—WHEN THE MACHINE HALTED TWO BUILDINGS AWAY FROM THE ONE I HAD MINED!
BUT THEN IT ROLLED RIGHT UNDER IT AND YOU WERE READY. GOOD WORK, HUNT!
THE SIGN IS READY, HUNT.
JUNE 17, 1979 — BY THIS NIGHT AN ENTIRE PATROL OF VOLTAMEN HAS BEEN DESTROYED. HUNT — BORYNIAH
THERE...THAT WILL GIVE THOSE DEVILS SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT!
WHILE, FROM HIS PERCH ON TOP OF GEORGE WASHINGTON'S STATUE, AUK'S BEADY EYES WATCH EVERY MOVE, AS...
BUT, UNDER THAT AVALANCHE OF DEBRIS...
VOLTA HEADQUARTERS! METAL LOCATOR PATROL 4-7 CALLING...
...EARTHMEN OUR MACHINE SMASHED HAVE... SOLE SURVIVOR I AM.!
GENERAL ELECTRIC
LOCATION ON STREET CALLED WALL IS, I INSIDE MACHINE AM. AID SEND!
ATTENTION.! PREPARE TO LAUNCH SPACE FLEET. I COMMAND TAKE WILL!

WHILE...
THAT SIGN YOU PLANTED WILL ENCOURAGE ALL EARTHPEOPLE TO CONTINUE OUR FIGHT... LOOK— WHAT'S THAT?
STRANGE VAPORS RISING FROM THE MOLE WHERE THE FALLEN BUILDING STOOD. COME! WE'LL INVESTIGATE!
A WIND HAS SPRUNG UP! IT SEEMS TO BE TRYING TO DRIVE US TOWARD THE MOLE.
DON'T GO TOO CLOSE! LOOK OUT!
THE EARTH'S CRUMBLING BENEATH OUR FEET.
QUICK! HOLD ON TO ME— JUMP!
LYSSA AND HUNT FELL INTO THE HOLE! BRING PLANKS AND ROPE— HURRY!
AND AUK TOO HAS SEEN... AND FLUTTERS CLOSER.
HIGH ABOVE, THE VOLTA SPACERS PROWL THE SKY...
...AND SCAN THE DEVASTATED STREETS BELOW... HUNTING THE SPOT WHERE THEIR COMRADES DIED.
WE, THE TERRITORY WHERE OUR METAL MACHINE WAS LOST, NEAR ARE. CAREFUL WATCH KEEP!
5


WHILE...AT THE BOTTOM OF THE CREVICE...
THE FORCE IS COMING FROM THAT ROOM, HUNT... IT'S DRAGGING US INSIDE!
COME, LYSSA, WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE!
NO, HUNT, THERE'S A MYSTERIOUS SOMETHING CALLING US...CAN'T YOU HEAR IT? - COME!
IT'S INSIDE THE ROOM...IT'S TRYING TO TELL US SOMETHING IMPORTANT...I'VE GOT TO GO TO IT!
THAT'S IT, HUNT, THAT GLOWING CAPSULE - AND LOCK - A VOLTAMAN!
SHHH...HE DOESN'T SEE US...MY BOY!
SHOOT, HUNT, SHOOT!
AND INSTANTLY, THE BOW STRING TWANGS...
THE ARROW FLIES AND PLUNGES INTO THE VOLTAMAN'S CHEST.
WHY... HE EXPLODED INTO DUST...AND DID YOU SEE THAT VISION IN THE CAPSULE?
YES...IT WAS A MIRROR IMAGE OF HIM, AND SEE... NOW IT'S FADING. WHAT CAN IT MEAN?
6


WHILE OUTSIDE, AUK, THE VULTURE, CREEPS CLOSER... HISSING HUNGRILY...
WORK FAST, MEN. WE'VE GOT TO FREE HUNT AND LYSSA!
JUST ON THIS SPOT AN ENTIRE PATROL OF VOLTAMEN WAS DESTROYED. HUNT! BOWMAN
LOOK! VOLTA SAUCERS! THEY'RE UNMASKING THEIR PARO-RAY CANNON!
LOOK, HUNT. THIS PLACE WAS ONCE A LABORATORY...THAT SKELETON, A SCIENTIST!
READ THE BOOK, LYSSA, IT MIGHT GIVE US A CLUE.
THEY WILL PARALYZE US ALL — RUN FOR YOUR LIVES — OHHH!
WE'RE TRAPPED... THE SUBWAY ENTRANCE IS BLOCKED. WE'LL HAVE TO SURRENDER!
'ON AUGUST 10TH, 1968, A GLOWING CAPSULE FELL NEAR NEW YORK FROM OUT OF SPACE. UNABLE TO DETERMINE ITS ORIGIN, IT WAS LOCKED IN A VAULT AND THE GREATEST OF EARTH SCIENTISTS WERE SUMMONED TO STUDY IT.
LYSSA, YOU SAW WHAT IT DID TO THE VOLTAMEN. WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE
NO, HUNT...IT'S CALLING US...
SEE...IT'S GLOWING AGAIN. IT'S URGING ME TO TOUCH IT.

WHILE ON THE STREET ABOVE...
INCH BY INCH, EVERY SPECK OF YOUR SKIN FROM YOUR BODY, I BURN WILL, UNLESS YOU WHERE BOWMAN IS, US TELL.
NO,! NO,! HE IS OUR LEADER... IF HE DIES THEN WE CAN NEVER WIN.....I... BUT I CAN'T STAND IT.!
HE IS IN THE HOLE...NOW STOP BURNING ME – STOP,!
ENOUGH. THESE PRISONERS IN OUR SPACESHIP CLOCK, WE BOWMAN WILL CAPTURE.!
AS, IN THE CAPSULE ROOM...
LOOK, HUNT, NOW I'VE TOUCHED IT, IT'S CHANGING – TAKING SHAPE.
YOUR OWN IMAGE, LYSSA... LISTEN.!
I AM EON OF MARS. I CAME TO WARN YOU THAT THE VOLTA HORDE PLANS TO INVADE EARTH.
THEY HAVE ASSEMBLED A THOUSAND SPACESHIPS ARMED WITH SCORCH RAYS. THEY WILL EXTERMINATE ALL LIFE.
AND ABOVE, AUK EDGES EVER CLOSER, CLUCKING SOFTLY...
ALL ME FOLLOW WILL. THE LEADER ESCAPE MUST NOT.!
THE WIND TOWARD THAT DOOR US PUSHES... AND LOOK INSIDE – THE EARTHPEOPLE.!
8

BUT YOU ARE TOO LATE WITH YOUR WARNING VOLTA HAS ALREADY CONQUERED EARTH—WHAT!
VOLTAMEN! DON'T SHOOT—GET BEHIND ME!
DON'T SHOOT! HUNT THE CAPSULE SAYS IT WILL PROTECT US!
HE, BORNMAN CAUGHT HAVE! BEHIND THAT THING THEY HIDE IT BLAST!
AAAEEAAA! DEATH TO THE DESTROYERS!
BACK!.. BACK! IT IS THE CRY OF A MARTIAN EMERGING!
SHOOT IT! SHOOT IT! IT TOWERS ABOVE US. HURLS IT'S FORCE ORBS!
OUR RAYS USELESS ARE. WE LOST HAVE. OHHHH!

DID YOU SEE WHAT HAPPENED, HUNT?
YES, AND NOW THE CAPSULE GLOWS AGAIN!
DEATH TO EVIL! EON, THING OF MARS, MUST GO... MY MISSION A FAILURE BECAUSE NONE WHO COULD UNDERSTAND AND WERE PRESENT WHERE I DERIVED
AAA EEE AAA!
THIS WAY, LYSSA... WE'VE GOT TO LEAVE THIS PLACE
YES, AND SEE HOW THE VOLTAMEN CRUMBLE TO DUST!
QUICK, LYSSA SOMETHING ELSE IS GOING TO HAPPEN...
I FEEL IT TOO WE MUST HURRY AND GET THE EARTH PEOPLE AWAY FROM HERE!
EVERYONE OUT AND FOLLOW US, COME!
YOU ARE BOTH ALIVE TO LEAD US IN OUR FIGHT... YOU ESCAPED THE VOLTAMEN!
YES, THEY ARE ALL DEAD... LOOK AT THE HOLE WE JUST LEFT - LOOK!
IT'S THE CAPSULE CARRYING EON BACK TO MARS! PERHAPS SOMEDAY IT WILL RETURN
AND SO ONCE MORE, AUK, THE VULTURE, RULES THE SILENT STREETS OF AN EMPTY CITY. CARYS TRIUMPHANTLY OVER DEATH AND DESOLATION!

LOST WORLD IN EVERY ISSUE OF PLANET COMICS!!

Futura

BY JOHN DOUGLAS

ATTENTION ALL UNIVERSES! CAPTAIN XARES OF SPACE PATROL SHIP NO 472/E ANNOUNCES THAT YRINA, THE FAMOUS PIRATE QUEEN, HAS BEEN CAPTURED AND IS NOW BEING TAKEN TO THE INTERPLANETARY COURT FOR TRIAL. DETAILS OF THE CAPTURE ARE BRIEF. HAVING SIGHTED A BEACON WHICH HAD APPARENTLY BROKEN LOOSE FROM ITS MOORINGS, CAPTAIN XARES INVESTIGATED AND DISCOVERED THE PIRATE BAND WAS USING IT FOR THEIR HEADQUARTERS. YRINA WAS INJURED BY THE ATTACK, BUT WAS POSITIVELY IDENTIFIED BY AN EARTH GIRL WHO CALLS HERSELF FUTURA.

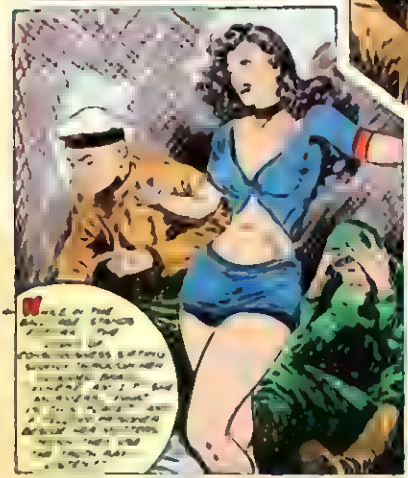
SO CACKLED THE DIOTEL COMMUNO WAVES. BUT BELOW IN THE SHAVING PRISON CHAMBER, A CAPTIVE STARE ERIS GLAZED BRAIN DAZED ..MUTE.. BUT SHE IS NOT YRINA - SHE IS FUTURA UNWILLING MASQUERADER FOR THE PIRATE GIRL...

AND NOW, THE PRISON SHIP HOVERS ABOVE THE COUNCIL PALACE AND THE SUSPENDED CAGE IS LOWERED INTO THE JUDGEMENT ROOM BELOW...

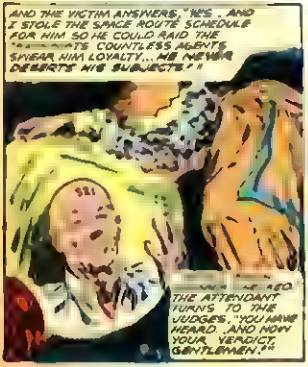
..WHILE, ON A DISTANT PLANET, YRINA QUAFFS FROM A GOLDEN GOBLET..STARES AT THE PROCEEDINGS THROUGH HER VIDEO. "FUTURA WILL DIE IN MY STEAD," SHE GLOATS. "NO ONE IS PRESENT TO DENY SHE IS NOT ME!... DRINK COMRADES ..DRINK TO NEW CONQUESTS...BIGGER, RICHER CARGO SHIPS TO LOOT!"

IN THE MONUMENT SPACE THREE SAGES SIT, AND AN EARTHMAN ...

"FIRST CASE" ONE CALLS... THE PRISONER ACCUSED OF THIEVERY



AND ON THE TABLE, RAYS PROBE THE ACCUSED ONE'S SOUL

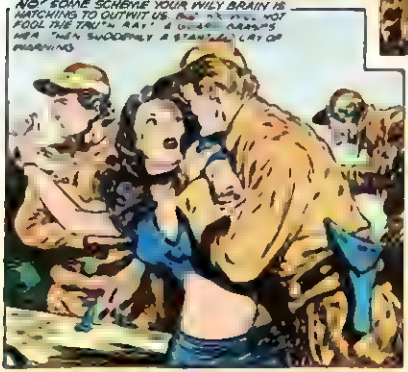

AND THE VICTIM ANSWERS, "YES ... AND I STOLE THE SPACE ROUTE SCHEDULE FOR HIM SO HE COULD RAID THE EMPIRE'S COUNTLESS AGENTS SWEAR HIM LOYALTY... HE NEVER DESERTS HIS SUBJECTS!"

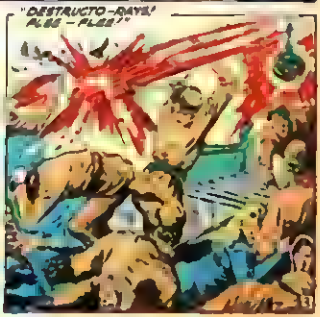
THE ATTENDANT TURNS TO THE JUDGES, "YOU HAVE HEARD, AND NOW YOUR VERDICT, GENTLEMEN?"

I, I AM FUTURA

"WE WILL HEAR MORE... STRAP HER TO THE CONFESSIONAL SLAB, THE JUDGES ORDER

"WILLINGLY I SUBMIT YOU WILL NOT DENY THE EVIDENCE I GIVE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE TRUTH RAY!"—FUTURA ANSWERS


NO! SOME SCHEME YOUR WILY BRAIN IS HATCHING TO OUTWIT US. BUT YOU WILL NOT FOOL THE TRUTH RAY! A QUICK SWING AND THEN SUDDENLY A STARTLING CLAP OF THUNDER!

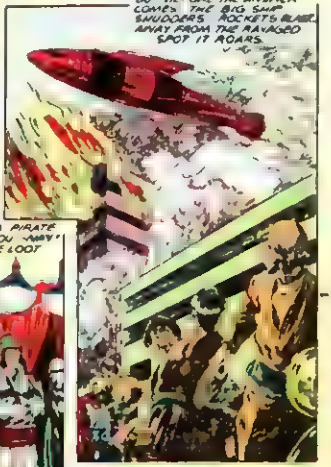

"DESTRUCTO-RAYS! ALAS — FLEE!"

OMMA, THE OMNIPOTENT HAS COME!
..AND AT THE CONTROLS, THE MASTER BRAINS NIMBALA
CONFUSION REIGNS...THEN DOWN THE LADDERS, COME OMMA'S RESCUE RAIDERS HURLED AGAINST THE TERROR FUMES
AND IN THE DEBRIS, FUTURA'S REMAINDER

CLING TIGHTLY I WILL SAVE YOU." THAT FRIENDLY VOICE AGAIN AND AUTOMATICALLY, FUTURA OBEYS

THE GUARD'S CHILLING SHOUT
BUT INSTANT RECOGNITION, "ENTER, FELLOW TRAVELER, HURRY - HURRY!"

AND SOON OMAHA CHIEF'S THE RESCUED ONES. MY YOUTH IS KEPT." HE BOASTS, "I HAVE SNATCHED MY MEN FROM THE LAWMAKERS' CLUTCHES."
THE SLOOP... BUT WHO'S "HIS" BIT OF BAGGAGE? WHO BROUGHT HER ABOARD?


BUT BEFORE THE ANSWER COMES, THE BIG SHIP'S BROADSIDE ROCKETS BLAST AWAY FROM THE RAVAGED SPOT IT ROARS.

HE'S THE ANSWER "HE'S A VIKING PIRATE QUEEN. MY LORD A PRIZE FOR YOU, MAY" FOR US ALL. WE WILL DIVIDE THE LOOT SHE HAS CACHED IN PLACES."
OR PERHAPS WE CAN SELL HER TO HER FOLLOWERS. SHE SHOULD BRING A WORTHY RANSOM." AND AS HE TALKS, FUTURA STIRS, EYELIDS FLUTTER. HER BRAIN AWAKENS... THE ONE TERRIFYING THOUGHT

"BUT WAIT. ONE CHANCE."

"SO, YOU ARE THE GREAT OMMA! THE DARING, DASHING BUCCANEER WHO HIDES AND POUNCES ON UNGUARDED SPACE LINERS!"
"WHY, YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A COWARDLY JACKAL! A SLINKING, CREEPING SPACE SCAVENGER! I'LL TAKE THAT RAY GUN!"
"TO THE CONTROLS, PILOT. TURN THIS SHIP AROUND AND HEAD BACK FOR THE NYTEA - PLANETOIDY ASTEROID!"
"MY NAME IS FUTURA, FUTURA, I SAY!" I EMARA YOU ONE LAST TIME! WHEN I WANT YOU OVER AND ABOVE I AM NOT WANA WHAT, OMMA!"
"HEH!... YOU LITTLE FOOL... DON'T LET ME DAD YOU!"
SO... YOU WERE GOING TO SELL US TO THE LAW, LINE YOUR POCKETS WITH GOLD STAINED WITH OUR BLOOD!
"BUT, I KNOW YOU ARE YANNA, THE FOULEST WENCH WHO EVER SAILED UNDER THE JOLLY ROGER! COMPARED TO YOU, I'VE ARE ANGELS AND MAY THE GODS FORGIVE ME FOR WHAT I AM ABOUT TO DO!"
...YOU CALL YOURSELF FUTURA."

FUTURA APPEARS IN EVERY ISSUE OF PLANET COMICS!

Dear Editor:

I am a science-fiction fan from way back, and my main reason for being such an enthusiastic fan of your magazine is that it's the best futuristic comic on the stands.

You don't kid your readers, you give us what we want. If the future civilizations are anything like what you picture them to be it will certainly be a swell age to live in.

Too bad more fans don't take advantage of the VIZI page. It's a perfect place to air your opinions. And my opinion of your book is that it's tops—except for one story—that's Star Pirate! He's strictly from hunger, and it would make me very happy if you gave him the bounce.

Futuristically yours,
Malice Starr
New York City.

Dear Sirs:

What ever happened to Flint Baker's original pal Reef Ryan? Herc is good, and don't take him out, but Reef certainly helped make Space Rangers a better comic story.

And while I'm complaining, I might add that I think Hunt Bowman has killed enough Voltaman. It certainly seems as if he should have killed off the whole race by now. How about letting Lost World be found?

Hopefully,
Carl Heifetz
Alberdeen, Md.

Dear Editor:

As a reader of several years, I would like to compliment you on your splendid magazine.

Auro and Mysta, in my opinion, are written the best. Star Pirate is another of my favorites. Why not retell the story of how Star Pirate came to be a futuristic Robin Hood?

Future was very good when it started, but now it seems to be bordering on the supernatural instead of the scientific!

I hope you have plans of bringing back that little Volta boy, Igor, in Lost World.

Please tell me, what happened to Reef Ryan? He was the best character in Space Rangers.

And last of all, I think the VIZIGRAPH page is a swell idea. Why don't some other fans tell what their favorite feature is? I know that my favorite is Star Pirate!

Science-fictionally yours,
Lorraine Charnoff
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Dear Editor:

I have been a constant reader of your magazine for the past year, and I think it's pretty good. I do have a few comments though.

Lost World is getting very boring. You repeat the same old stuff over and over.

Mysta is very beautiful and always interesting.

Auro, Lord of Jupiter, bores me too. Why can't he make up his own mind, must Chet Edson tell a ruler what to do?

Yours for a better comic,
Darlene Zimmer
Detroit, Mich.

Dear Sirs:

This is the first time I have read your magazine, and it's a very good comic book—except for Future—that is strictly N. G.

Star Pirate is my favorite. Auro is all right, I guess. But by the way, in Future, how could a tree swing down its limbs and pick her up?

Yours truly,
Jim Cassidy
Williamsport, Pa.

Dear Jim:

Try and bear with us, this is a magazine of the civilizations to come. In the future we believe that almost anything will be possible.

The Editor

Dear Editor:

I like your book very much. The pictures are good and the stories are usually interesting.

My favorite story is Star Pirate. The drawings are especially good in this feature.

There is one feature in particular that I dislike, and that's Mysta of the Moon. The drawing couldn't be worse. I have a suggestion which I hope you'll think about. Take Mysta out, and make Star Pirate longer. Or if you can't do that, please bring Gale Allen back.

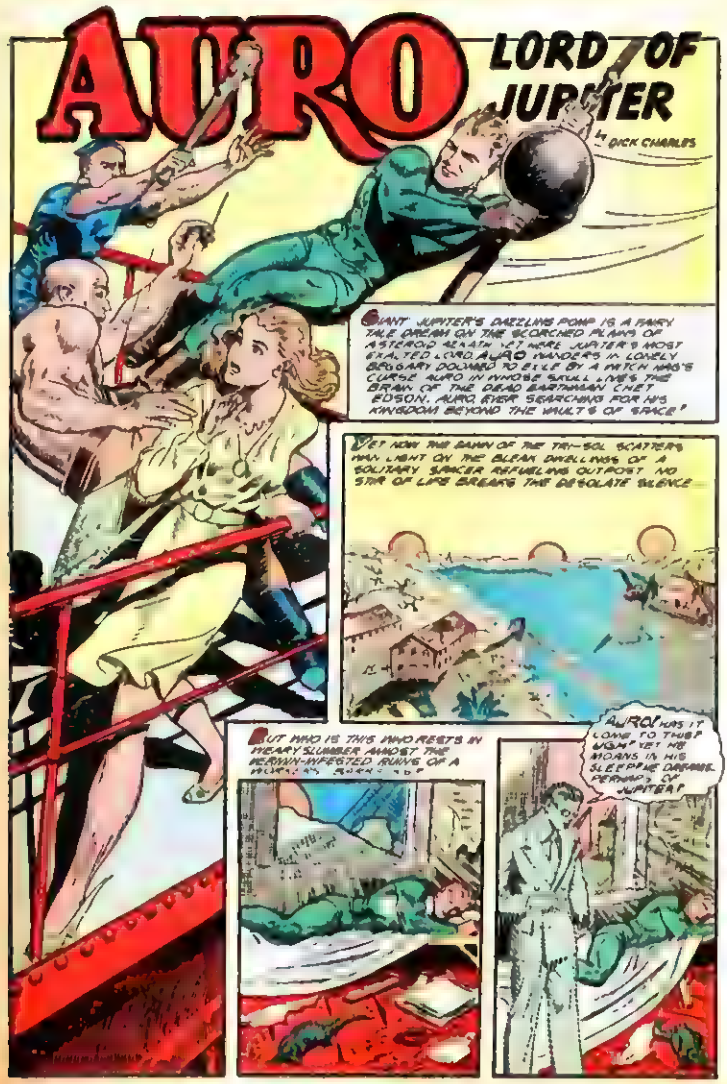
Yours Truly,
Jay Johnson
Redondo Beach, Calif.

Dear Editor:

I've been reading your magazine for as long as I can remember, and I've enjoyed every one of your issues.

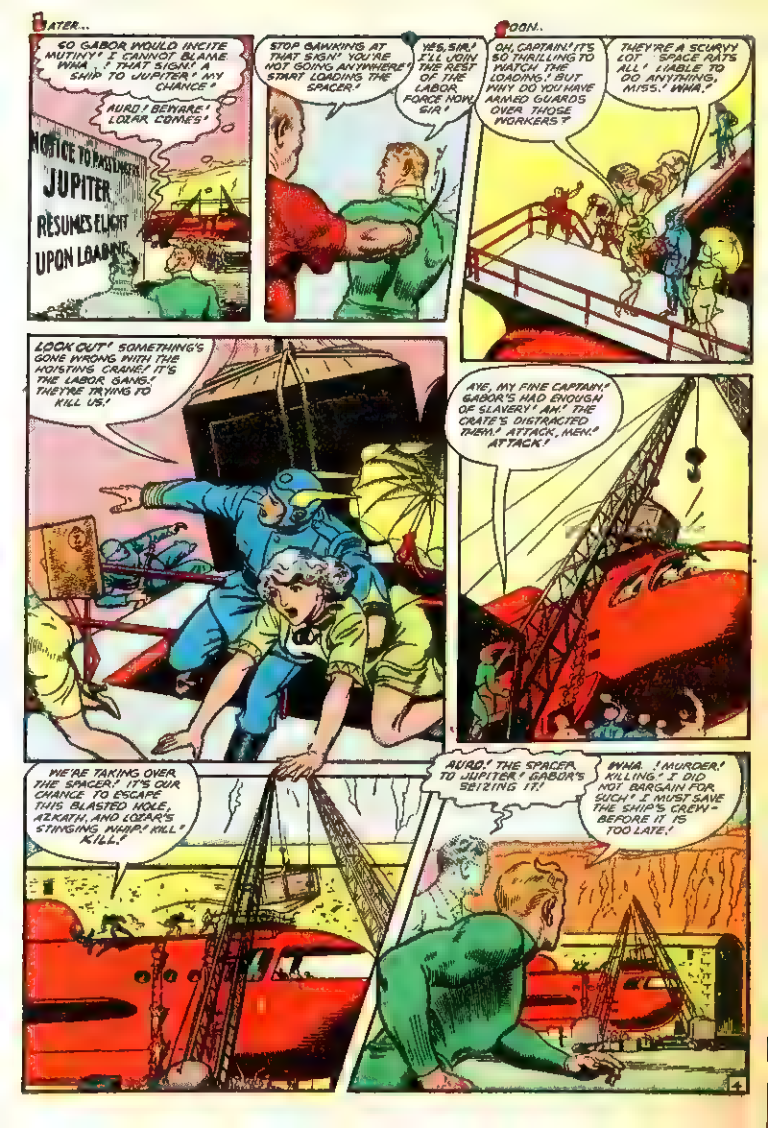
I like to read the VIZIGRAPH, and can't understand why so many people are dissatisfied with your comic book. I like everything about it, and hope that your magazine will always be around for everyone to read.

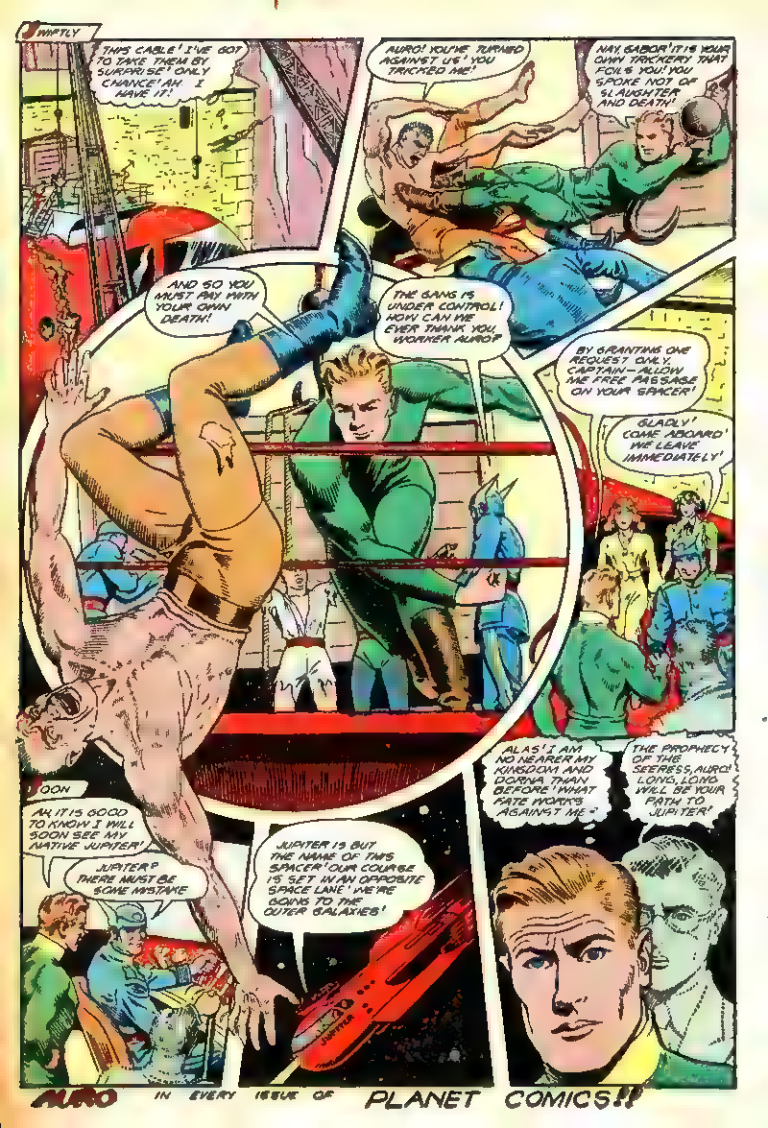
Emma Louise Brooks
Apalachicola, Fla.


AURO
LORD OF JUPITER
by DICK CHARLES
GIANT JUPITER'S DAZZLING POMP IS A FAIRY TALE DREAM ON THE SCORCHED PLAINS OF ASTEROID ALPHA-IX WHERE JUPITER'S MOST BIZARRE LORD, AURO WANDERS IN LONELY EXILE DOOMED TO DIE BY A WITCH WHO'S CURSE AURO IN WHOSE SKULL LIVES THE BRAIN OF THE DEAD EARTHMAN CHET EDISON, AURO KEEP SEARCHING FOR HIS KINGDOM BEYOND THE VAULTS OF SPACE!
YET NOW THE DAWN OF THE TRI-SOL SCATTERS HAS LIGHT ON THE BLEAK DWELLINGS OF A SOLITARY SPACER REFUELING OUTPOST. NO STIR OF LIFE BREAKS THE DESOLATE SILENCE
BUT WHO IS THIS WHO RESTS IN HEAVY SLUMBER AMIDST THE REDWIN-INFESTED RUINS OF A
AURO! HAS IT COME TO THIS? WON'T YET HE MOANS IN HIS SLEEPING DARKNESS, PERHAPS OF JUPITER?

DREAMS A SON INDEED FILLS AURO'S TIRED BRAIN. AEKATH'S PUNCHED MISSILES MADE SLOWLY ALAND OF GLITTERING SPLENDOR HIS INNER EYE IT IS A DAY OF GREAT FESTIVITY. A CROWDS GALA GALLOPS THRONG THE ARENA. GLADIATORS PARADE A HUSH AS THEY UNITED TWO, NOW THEY PREPARE FOR COMBAT AND SOON...
CHARGE! COME, BARON TORS! I HAVE HEARD YOU BOAST - TO PRINCESS DORNA HOW YOU WOULD UNSEAT ME! YOU SEEK FAVOR IN THE EYES OF AURO'S MATE, EH?
LIES! I'LL STILL YOUR GOSSIPING TONGUE, LORD RADU! NOW! MY LANCE AWAITS TRUE!
IT'S DONE! NOW WILL I RECEIVE A VICTOR'S LAURELS FROM PRINCESS DORNA HERSELF!
BRAVO, BARON TORS! YOUR SKILL BRINGS MEMORY OF HOW MY LORD AURO, ONCE DID JOUST!
MANY THANKS, FAIR DORNA!
THE FOOL AURO IS LONG DEAD! TONIGHT I WILL SEEK HER HAND THEN, I MAY RULE ALL JUPITER!
LATER
YOU NEED NOT MY WORDS OF LOVE, DORNA! WHY? WHY?
NAY! I AM BOUND TO ANOTHER! AS LONG AS MY AURO LIVES, I CANNOT
BUT IT IS RUMORED HE IS DEAD! NEVER HAS HE RETURNED TO JUPITER!
ME LIVES! ME LIVES! BEHOLD HIS SWORD HE SENT ME! NOT TWENTY SUNS AGO AS PROOF!
HMM... AURO WRANGLES OF HIS SWORD HE DISPATCHED TO JUPITER! ALAS, HE SOLD ME HELPLESS TO ANY THE SPACE HELL FORCES FROM IT!
WAKE, AURO, WAKE! THE OVERSEER COMES!
GET UP, YOU LAZY LOUT! LOZAR'S THE BOSS HERE ON AEKATH AND WHEN I SAY GET UP, I MEAN IT! OBEY, YOU SPACE SCUM! OBEY!

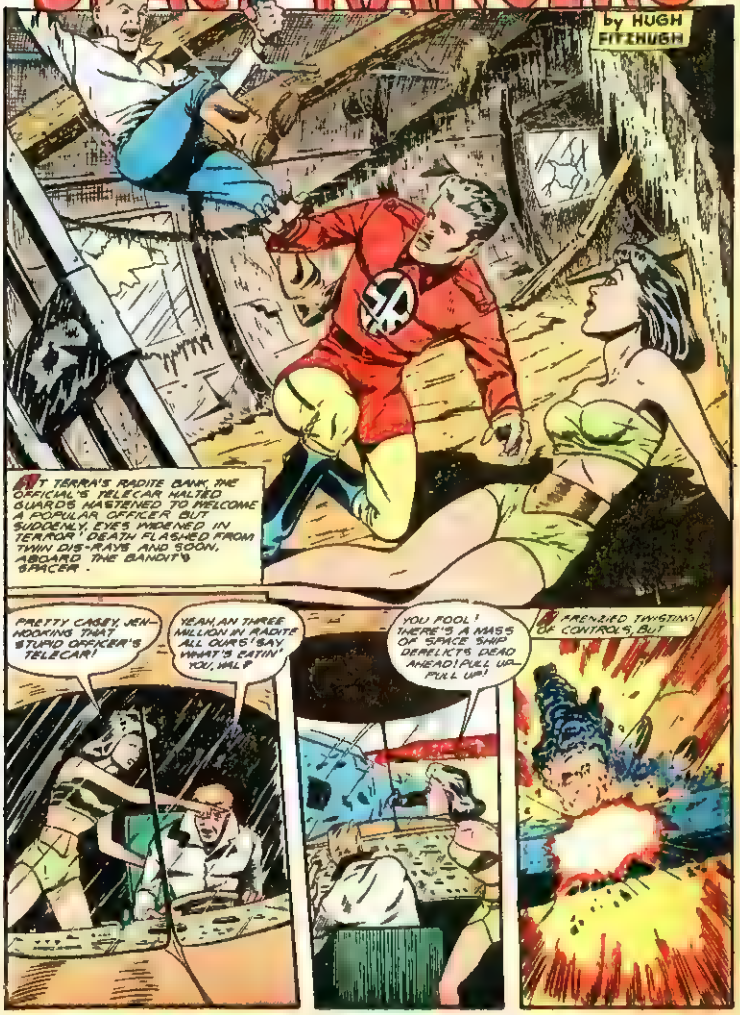
DO YOU THINK YOU'RE ANY BETTER THAN THE REST OF THESE SPACER STEREOTYPES? HUH?
HUH? WHAT I MEAN, HOW DARE YOU MAKE AURO IN SUCH A MANNER!!
WHY, I WILL POUND YOUR DULL BRAINS TO A STRA PULP, YOU BULLYING OX!
TALKING BACK TO YOUR FOREMAN, EH? A TASTE OF MY ELECTRO-WHIP WILL TEACH YOU, MANNERS, SCUM OF SPACE!
GIVE IT TO HIM, AURO! LOZAR'S BEEN STRUTTING OVER US LIKE A CLANKIN' KING FOR TOO LONG!
KICK HIM FOR ME!
HE THINKS HE OWNS US BECAUSE WE SLAVE IN HIS ROTTEN LABOR GANG! KILL HIM, AURO!
NO! NO, AURO! YOU WILL LOSE YOUR JOB! YOU NEED MONEY FOR PASSAGE TO JUPITER! AH... HE HEELS ME!
F-FORGIVE ME LOZAR... I LOST MY TEMPER... S-SORRY, I...
THAT'S BETTER, YOU WORTHLESS CUR! NOW EVERYBODY GET OUT AND GET TO WORK!
TODAY YOU'RE LOADING THE SPACER THAT JUST CAME IN! FALL IN LINE, AURO!
I MUST OBEY! I MUST SAVE KREDITS IF I AM EVER TO REACH JUPITER!
IT IS THE ONLY WAY I CAN LEAVE AZKATH!
PSST! AURO! LISTEN TO ME!
WHAT WOULD YOU TELL ME, GABOR?
JUST THIS, AURO. YOU'RE ONE OF US! WE'RE GONNA FIX THAT LOZAR AND GET OUT OF THIS STINKING HOLE! I'VE GOT A PLAN! LISTEN

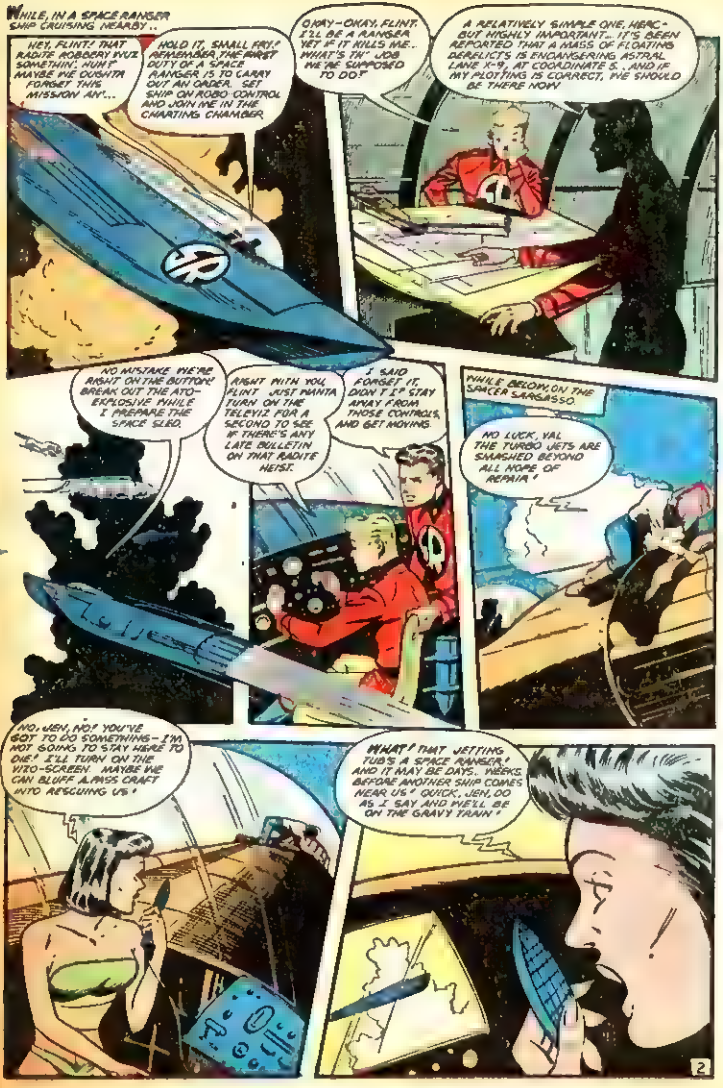

LATER...
SO GABOR WOULD INCITE MUTINY? I CANNOT BLAME HIM... THAT SIGN! A SHIP TO JUPITER! MY CHANCE!
AURD! BEWARE! LOZAR COMES!
NOTICE TO PASSENGERS
JUPITER
RESUMES FLIGHT
UPON LOADING
STOP GAWKING AT THAT SIGN! YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE! START LOADING THE SPACER!
YES, SIR! I'LL JOIN THE REST OF THE LABOR FORCE NOW, SIR!
SOON...
OH, CAPTAIN! IT'S SO THRILLING TO WATCH THE LOADING! BUT WHY DO YOU HAVE ARMED GUARDS OVER THOSE WORKERS?
THEY'RE A SCURVY LOT, SPACE RATS ALL! UNABLE TO DO ANYTHING, MISS! WHA!
LOOK OUT! SOMETHING'S GONE WRONG WITH THE HOISTING CRANE! IT'S THE LABOR GANG! THEY'RE TRYING TO KILL US!
AYE, MY FINE CAPTAIN! GABOR'S HAD ENOUGH OF SLAVERY! AM! THE CRATE'S DISTRACTED THEM! ATTACK, MEN! ATTACK!
WE'RE TAKING OVER THE SPACER! IT'S OUR CHANCE TO ESCAPE THIS BLASTED HOLE, AZKATH, AND LOZAR'S STINGING WHIP! KILL! KILL!
AURD! THE SPACER TO JUPITER! GABOR'S SEIZING IT!
WHA...! MURDER! KILLING! I DID NOT BARGAIN FOR SUCH! I MUST SAVE THE SHIP'S CREW - BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE!
4


SWIFTLY
THIS CABLE! I'VE GOT TO TAKE THEM BY SURPRISE! ONLY CHANCE! AH I HAVE IT!
AURO! YOU'VE TURNED AGAINST US! YOU TRICKED ME!
NAY, GABOR! IT IS YOUR OWN TREACHERY THAT FOOLS YOU! YOU SPOKE NOT OF SLAUGHTER AND DEATH!
AND SO YOU MUST PAY WITH YOUR OWN DEATH!
THE GANG IS UNDER CONTROL! HOW CAN WE EVER THANK YOU, WORRIER AURO?
BY GRANTING ONE REQUEST ONLY, CAPTAIN—ALLOW ME FREE PASSAGE ON YOUR SPACER!
GLADLY! COME ABOARD! WE LEAVE IMMEDIATELY!
SOON
AH, IT IS GOOD TO KNOW I WILL SOON SEE MY NATIVE JUPITER!
JUPITER? THERE MUST BE SOME MISTAKE
JUPITER IS BUT THE NAME OF THIS SPACER! OUR COURSE IS SET IN AN OPPOSITE SPACE LANE! WE'RE GOING TO THE OUTER GALAXIES!
JUPITER
ALAS! I AM NO NEARER MY KINGDOM AND DONNA THAN BEFORE! WHAT FATE WORKS AGAINST ME?
THE PROPHECY OF THE SEERESS, AURO! LONG, LONG WILL BE YOUR PATH TO JUPITER!
AURO IN EVERY ISSUE OF PLANET COMICS!!

SPACE RANGERS

by HUGH FITZHUGH


AT TERRA'S RADITE BANK, THE OFFICIAL'S TELECAR HALTED. GUARDS HASTENED TO WELCOME A POPULAR OFFICER. BUT SUDDENLY, EYES WIDENED IN TERROR AT DEATH FLASHED FROM TWIN DIS-RAYS! AND SOON, ABOARD THE BANDIT'S SPACER.
PRETTY CASEY, JEN-HOOKING THAT STUPID OFFICER'S TELECAR!
YEAH, AN THREE MILLION IN RADITE ALL OURS! SAY WHAT'S EATIN' YOU, VAL?
YOU FOOL! THERE'S A MASS OF SPACE SHIP DERELICTS DEAD AHEAD! PULL UP... PULL UP!
FRENZIED TWISTING OF CONTROLS, BUT


WHILE, IN A SPACE RANGER SHIP CRUISING NEARBY..
HEY, FLINT! THAT RADITE ROBBERY WUZ SOMETHING! HUH? MAYBE WE OUGHTA FORGET THIS MISSION AN'...
HOLD IT, SMALL FRY! REMEMBER THE FIRST DUTY OF A SPACE RANGER IS TO CARRY OUT AN ORDER. SET SHIP ON ROBO CONTROL AND JOIN ME IN THE CHARTING CHAMBER.
OKAY-OKAY, FLINT. I'LL BE A RANGER YET IF IT KILLS ME.. WHAT'S TH' JOB WE'RE SUPPOSED TO DO?
A RELATIVELY SIMPLE ONE, HERC- BUT HIGHLY IMPORTANT!.. IT'S BEEN REPORTED THAT A MASS OF FLOATING DERELICTS IS ENDANGERING ASTRAL LANE X-9 AT COORDINATE S.. AND IF MY PLOTTING IS CORRECT, WE SHOULD BE THERE NOW.
NO MISTAKE. WE'RE RIGHT ON THE BUTTON! BREAK OUT THE ATO-EXPLOSIVE WHILE I PREPARE THE SPACE SLED.
RIGHT WITH YOU, FLINT. JUST WANTA TURN ON THE TELEVIZ FOR A SECOND TO SEE IF THERE'S ANY LATE BULLETIN ON THAT RADITE HEIST.
I SAID FORGET IT, DION! I'P STAY AWAY FROM THOSE CONTROLS, AND GET MOVING.
WHILE BECOM, ON THE SARGASSO..
NO LUCK, YAL THE TURBO JETS ARE SMASHED BEYOND ALL HOPE OF REPAIR!
NO, JEN, NO! YOU'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING- I'M NOT GOING TO STAY HERE TO DIE! I'LL TURN ON THE VIZO-SCREEN. MAYBE WE CAN BLUFF A PASS CRAFT INTO RESCUING US!
WHAT! THAT JETTING TUB'S A SPACE RANGER! AND IT MAY BE DAYS.. WEEKS BEFORE ANOTHER SHIP COMES NEAR US! QUICK, JEN, DO AS I SAY AND WE'LL BE ON THE GRAVY TRAIN!
2

WHILE...
OUR BUGGY'S SET ON HOVERING, FLINT. AND I LOADED TH' ATO-EXPLOSIVE ON TH SLED. ANYTHING ELSE?
YES, HOW ABOUT THE SUCTO-DISCS? I MAY HAVE A LITTLE TROUBLE MOVING ABOUT, YOU KNOW...
I DIDN'T FORGET THEM, EITHER AN' FLINT, WHILE YOU'RE GONE, COULD I ER...
I THINK I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO ASK ME, AND THE ANSWER IS NO - POSITIVELY NO! YOU'RE TO STAY AWAY FROM THE VIZIO CONTROLS AT ALL TIMES!
YOUR JOB'S TO HELP ME - NOT TO MESS AROUND WITH THINGS THAT DON'T CONCERN YOU IS THAT CLEAR?
SORRY, FLINT - GUESS I'M TOO CURIOUS ABOUT THAT ROBLEAY GOOD LUCK!
ROAR, A VIOLENT HISS, AND...
I'M OFF. GOSH, I HATE TO BE SO HARD ON THE KID, BUT HE'S GOT TO LEARN DISCIPLINE SOME TIME! BUT I WONDER WHAT DID HAPPEN TO THAT RADITE?
MAYBE IF I PECKED ON MY EMERGENCY SET FOR NEWS... GOSH! I GOT TO REMEMBER MY JOB - AND THAT'S TO CLEAN UP THIS AIR LANE!
AW, NUTS! THIS LANCER STUFF AIN'T ALL IT'S CRACKED UP TO BE! WHAT HAWK IS THERE IN TURNIN' ON TH' VIZIO - AND WHO'D KNOW IF I DID?
THAT'S WHAT I SAY, CHUM! YOU'RE NOT GONNA LISSEN TO OLD STICK-IN-THE-MUD BAKER ARE YOU? GO AHEAD. TURN IT ON!
YEAH, WHY NOT - FLINT'D NEVER KNOW! BUT ON TH' OTHER HAND...
ON THE OTHER HAND YOU'D BE DISOBEYING A RANGER SUPERIOR! GET YOUR HAND AWAY FROM THOSE CONTROLS!
3

THESE SUCTO-DISCS CAME IN HANDY AFTER ALL.. I THINK I CAN SQUEEZE THROUGH THIS CRACK BUT DARN! CAN'T GET MERC OFF MY MIND — WISH I HADN'T BEEN SO TOUGH ON THE YOUNG SQUIRT!
SOON AS I PLANT THIS EXPLOSIVE I'LL HUSTLE BACK TO THE SHIP AND WHAT'S THAT!! SOMEONE'S SCREAMING!
HELP! HELP! GET ME OUT OF THIS HELL HOLE!
GREAT SCOTT! DON'T KNOW HOW YOU EVER GOT TRAPPED HERE! BUT EASY DOES IT, I'LL BLAST YOU OUT!
THERE YOU'RE FREE! NOW SUPPOSE YOU TELL ME WHO'S THAT?
SHOW HIM, JEN! THE STUPID FOOL FELL RIGHT INTO OUR TRAP!
BUNK — I'M GONNA TURN TH' TELEVIZ ON BUT JUST TO MAKE SURE FLINT DOESN'T CATCH ME I'LL TURN TH' SCANNER ON HIM FIRST!
JUMPIN' ASTEROIDS! FLINT'S OUT COLD — AN' THOSE BABIES ARE PIXIN' TO BLOW HIM UP WITH HIS OWN ATO-EXPLOSIVE!
4

GOT HIS SLED LOADED WITH TH' RADITE LOOT? GOOD, GOOD - I'LL BE RIGHT WITH YOU, VAL AND NOW SO LONG, SUCKER IN JUST ABOUT FIVE MINOS YOU'LL BE BLASTED TO KINGDOM COME!
HEAD FOR HIS BIG SHIP! HE'LL TAKE THAT OVER, THEN VET TO OUR HIDEOUT!
HERC - POOR HERC! THERE'S NO WAY HE COULD - NOW, WHAT'S HAPPENED? THOSE INCREDIBLE VILLAINS! VILLAINS! AND IN LESS THAN FOUR MINOS I'LL GET THE SAME TREATMENT!
BUT
JEB! - WATCH OUT! THEY'RE FIRING ON US! FULL VORTEX - TRY TO OUTRUN THEM!
O! MUST MAKE MY FIRST BLAST COUNT! FLINT'S IN DANGER I GOTTA SAVE HIM!
VAL - WE'RE HIT! SHIPS FALLING APART! OOH!
THROWN CLEAR OF SMASHED CRAFT THE SPACE PIRATES CONVULSE HELPLESSLY IN THE AIRLESS VOID! BUT THE BATTLE IS NOT YET WON. TIME TICKS OMINOUSLY ON AND IT IS ONLY AS THE LAST MINO DRAWS TO A CLOSE THAT A BREATHLESS HERC BOARDS THE SPACE DERELICT AND SNUFFS OUT THE ATO-BLAST FUSE! LATER, EN ROUTE TO TERRA WITH THE RADITE MUNCKERS SECURELY BOUND
LUCKY FOR YOU I'M A SMART COOKIE AND TUNED IN TH' VIZIO, FLINT. I OUGHTA GET A REWARD FOR SOON AS I SEE YA AND SAVIN' YOUR HIDE! HEY, IXNAY, FLINT?
I'LL GIVE YOU A RIITING REWARD!
THIS'LL HELP YOU TO REMEMBER NOT TO BREAK AN ORDER A RANGER HAS TO OBEY!
GOLLY (JOINT) OUCH! CUT IT OUT! GEE WHIZ, I CAN'T WIN NOHOW!
SPACE RANGERS APPEARS IN EVERY PLANET COMICS!

THE UNGUARDED PASS

By Thornecliffe Herrick

KING JAVEL'S FACE showed deep concern as Ed Bradon came alone into the shadowed council room. A great deal would depend upon the observation Bradon and his scouts had made of the unsurper Queen Torma's patrol under the ruthless leadership of the renegade Earthman, Stevens.

Ed Bradon stood crisply at attention, a sparkle of mirth in his keen, determined eyes. "It's now or never," he said firmly. "If your people wait any longer for an offensive against the tyrant Queen, their fighting spirits will not flame with such reckless courage. Tonight is the moment to strike. My men, Wilson and Gordon, have already found an unguarded pass through the mountains. When the Saffron Star rises over the western peaks, we will lead your people in a flanking attack. Queen Torma will order her forces to fight to the death, but Stevens will disobey her orders to save his own skin."

"Your plan sounds excellent," the grizzled king exclaimed. "If it succeeds, the battle by the expedition which brought Commander Martin and you from Earth will go down in the history of the Universe as one of the greatest victories over oppression. Great moons! I'm impatient to meet Martin and offer him every aid in refitting his space ships."

"I'm sure you will," Ed Bradon assured him. "But there's not much time, Sir. I will send in your armorer on my way out. Your people must bear every available weapon tonight!"

A slender, beautiful girl, girded and breasted with mail, sprang lithely from a dark niche as Bradon ran down the tunnel from the council chamber.

"Ed! Did my father believe you?"

"Shh!" Bradon warned. "Not so loud! If he suspects that Stevens' men hold the pass, he will not give the command tonight."

But suddenly Bradon's thoughts were halted abruptly by a shout from the guards at the tunnel mouth. Lustra matched his pace, and in a few moments they stopped breathlessly before the armed guardians of the underground domain.

"Ray fire!" a tall, weatherbeaten guard exclaimed. "Your two companions were over in the west pass, weren't they, Bradon?"

"Yes!" Bradon said in voice that betrayed no fear. "But don't worry about those shots. Gordon is probably taking a bit of target practice. He's not used to Parunian ray guns. Princess Lustra and I are on our way to the pass. We'll fire three blasts if anything is wrong."

"Barely an hour before darkness," Bradon muttered. "If Stevens' scouts are stationed at the west pass, we'll have to send back a signal to cancel the proposed attack."

"My father will be heartbroken," Lustra replied. "He'd staked all his hopes on joining Commander Martin. Queen Torma and her renegade Earthman would rejoice at the chance to slaughter every soul amongst us. We must not fail!"

"That's the stuff, Lustra. If Wilson and Gordon are still alive, there's a chance we can outwit Stevens' patrol. Look! There's Gordon now—behind that jagged boulder overhanging the cliff!"

Gordon, hanging on by one hand, was waving a frantic signal for them to get back against the wall of the pass.

Grabbing Lustra's arm, Bradon heeded his friend's signal. And not a moment too soon. For Ray-gun bursts were already kicking up the gravel behind them as flashes blazed along the ridge of the pass.

"A whole squad of *Tormalists!*" Bradon exclaimed huskily when they reached Gordon and Wilson.

Gordon shook his head grimly. "We haven't a chance to stop them. I guess Javel will have a long wait before he can lead his people to freedom."

"No! We can't fail him now!" Ed Bradon said as he grabbed the Parunian ray rifle which Gordon had dropped. "King Javel will lead his people into the pass before Stevens' legion arrives if we make it tough for those scouts now!"

Lustra, Gordon and Wilson watched silently as Bradon swung the rifle in a slow arc. A muscle twitched on his face when he spotted the lone figure racing down the ridge.

Then the rifle steadied in Bradon's firm hands and a bolt of flame belched from the bore.

"That will discourage any more of them from going for aid. The Great Sun is already setting, and soon the Saffron Star will rise over the peak. If we can hold off that squad until your father comes, the rest will be easy!"

Gordon drew a ray pistol from his belt, thumbed the safety and made a sweeping gesture toward the rock wall. "Keep the rifle, Ed. We'll leave Lustra here and creep up on them. Wilson will go down the line, and I'll climb up the north wall."

Tim Wilson, shifting his ray rifle to his left hand, held out the other toward Bradon. "One of us may not come back. Let's shake. Whatever happens, I know each of us will go down shooting if those Tormalists pick us off."

Fear shadowed Lustra's eyes as she watched the gallant trio ascend the perilous wall.

The somber Parunian night was already closing in about her. Shadows flickered through the pass. And above the peak a saffron glow was tinting the sky. At any moment now her father would lead his people into the pass, unaware of the peril that lay ahead of them. But before Lustra could take a step in the direction of the tunnel, a dark shape slithered down from the rocks above and fell on her back with spine-snapping force.

Meanwhile Ed Bradon had scaled the wall and from a natural cover of lignite rocks was picking off the Tormalist scouts as often as one showed his head.

In the excitement of the skirmish Bradon had forgotten his promises to the tunnel guards. But they were keenly alert, and when they saw the flash of ray guns, they sent word to King Javel that the Earthmen had run into trouble.

"Even if it's suicide," the grizzled old warrior muttered as he drew the messenger aside, "we must go on! My people are armed and ready. We shall head for the pass at once."

Bradon, moving along the ridge, turned and saw their dark figures making a line through the gloom below. He muttered a prayer that they would escape before Stevens' savage forces overwhelmed them with superior weapons.

He came upon Gordon and Wilson suddenly. "All clear?" he asked in a whisper.

"All but one of 'em is accounted for," Gordon murmured. "But one is enough to bring Stevens' forces. It's tough we missed him."

"We made a good score," Bradon said. "King Javel's people are going through the pass already. Come on. Let's join them. You can find that rope, can't you, Tim?"

"Sure . . . sure!" Wilson agreed as they moved off through the spreading light of the Saffron Star.

Princess Lustra had begun to move, and the Tormalist scout had shifted his grip to his ray pistol's barrel. A flash of the gun would warn the Javelists coming down the pass, but a sharp blow of the gun butt on the girl's head would make her lapse back into unconsciousness until the troop had passed.

Then Ed Bradon, starting down the rope, saw Lustra's danger.

As the Tormalist moved toward the girl his heavy boot grated in the gravel, the sound drowning out the hum of leather against the rope above him. Bradon saw the ray pistol swing back over the Tormalist's shoulder as the ugly creature reached Lustra's side. Bradon knew there wasn't a split second to spare. Twenty-five or thirty feet remained to the floor of the pass, but if Ed Bradon clung to the rope, Lustra might suffer a fractured skull—possibly death.

The moment that thought flashed through Bradon's brain he kicked hard against the rock wall, releasing his grip on the rope. In the darkness he couldn't tell exactly where he would land. A second later his boots struck the Tormalist's head with a sharp thud and almost simultaneously came the sickening snap of the enemy's neck.

While Gordon dragged the Tormalist back into the shadow, Bradon helped Lustra to her feet. "Wh-what happened?" she asked blearily. "Oh, here comes my father at the head of his people!"

Before Bradon could speak, the King drew up before them. "Well, Bradon . . . you seem to have been mistaken about this pass. You ran into a Tormalist patrol?"

Ed stood crisply at attention beside Princess Lustra. "No danger, Sir! My companions were shooting at shadows. We Earthmen are full of pranks, you know. One of the shots must have dislodged a rock which fell on Lustra."

Lustra choked back a laugh. Her hand, tightening on Ed Bradon's arm, assured him that she would keep the secret.

STAR PIRATE

by LEN DODSON

WHO IS STAR PIRATE? HERE IS THE STORY OF A KNIGHT WITH A SPACE SHIP IN PLACE OF A STEED A BLASTER IN PLACE OF A LANCE AND A HEART IN PLACE OF A PLUME HERE IS THE TALE OF ROBIN HOOD SET IN THE WONDER-WORLD OF TOMORROW! AND NOW, AS THE JOLLY DOOMER IDLES IN THE UPPER VOID....

WE'RE GOING TO PARK HERE ARE YOU READY YET BLACKY?

DAMN YOU AND THEIR DISGUISES ANYWAY, STAR! YOU'RE ALWAYS UP TO SOME SHENNANIGANS!

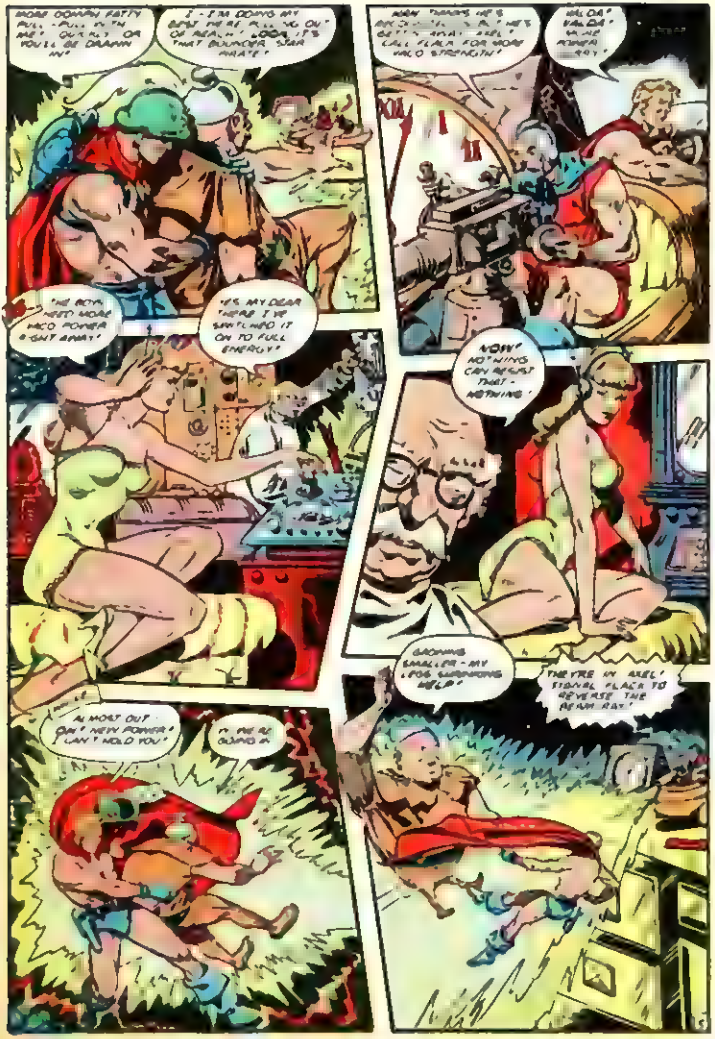
THERE! SUFFERIN' COMETS, ME COSTUME SHRUNK! IT WON'T FIT AN OUT SIZED MIDGET! I'M NOT GOIN'!

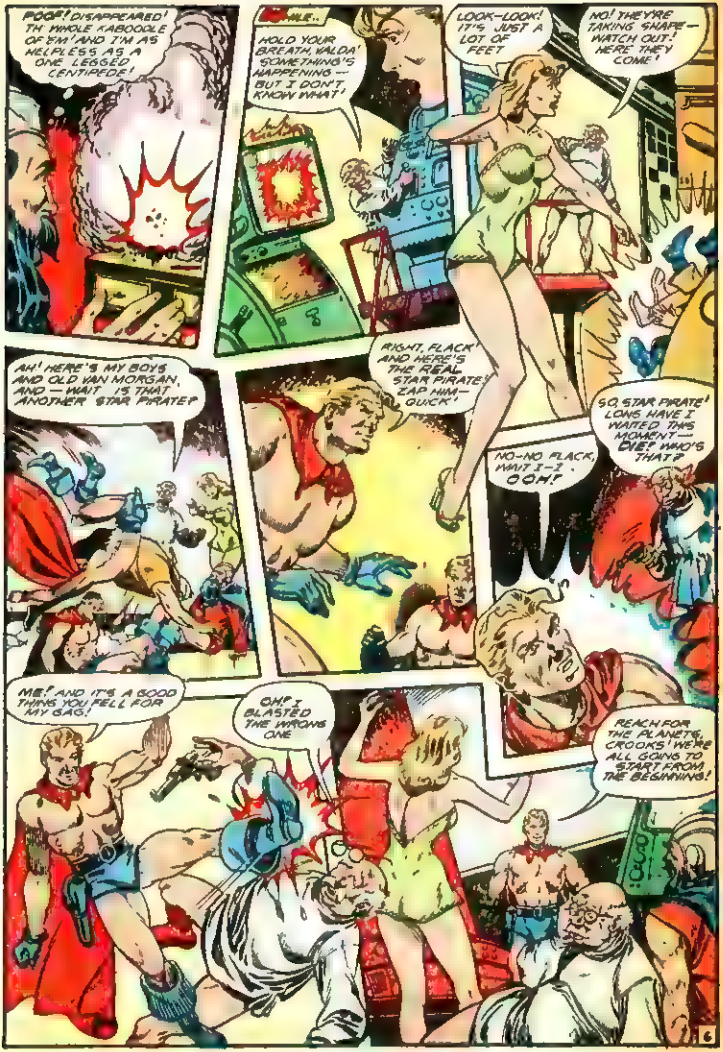
YOU'RE NOT, EH? THAT'S TOO BAD — I COUNTED ON YOUR COMPANY!

AND SINCE WHEN DO YOU GIVE THE ORDERS, GIT!
OUCH! ALL RIGHT! I'LL BE GOOD, STAR! WHERE ME HEADIN' FER?
THAT RADIATION SANITORIUM! I THINK THE DIRECTOR HAS RUN OUT OF MAZUMA!
LOOK! A SMANKY SPACE SLED JUST LANDED ON TH' ROOF!
WAIT FOR ME THIS WILL TAKE ONLY A MOMENT ER, DIRECTOR ELNA, I PRESUME?
GREETINGS. SURE YAH MORGAN? YOU'RE HERE FOR THE MORTGAGE PAYMENT
I KNOW IT'S PAST DUE - B BUT BEFORE YOU FORECLOSE, PLEASE LET ME SHOW THE GOOD WORK I'M DOING HERE
WELL, ER, ALL RIGHT - BUT I CAN'T TAKE TOO MUCH TIME! I'M A VERY BUSY MAN AND YOU ARE DELINQUENT FOR A HUNDRED THOUSAND CREDITS!
I KNOW - BUT LOOK, SIRE THOSE BOYS WERE HOPELESS CASES WHEN THEY CAME HERE - TOO POOR FOR REGULAR TREATMENTS BUT THOSE RADIATION GEYSERS HAVE WORKED WONDERS
MY DEAR, FOOLISH GIRL, I'M A HARD-HEADED BUSINESS MAN. IF YOU WISH TO EXTEND CHARITY, THAT'S YOUR AFFAIR. YOU HAVE NOT GIVEN ME ONE SOLID REASON WHY I SHOULD DEFER FORECLOSURE! WHAT'S THAT?
ONLY A HUNDRED THOUSAND REASONS WHY YOU WILL NOT FORECLOSE, YOU SKINFLINT!

HMM. WONDER WHO THAT GUY IN DISGUISE IS? O'JIA CONTACT FLACK YET, ROFF?
NO. I'M TRYING TO GET THE OLD BILLYGOAT. WAIT! SOMEONE'S COMING IN NOW.
VALDA? LISTEN, EVERYTHING'S SET! VAN MORGAN'S IN WITH THE GIRL NOW! WHAT'S KEEPING YOU UP THERE?
I'LL FIND OUT, ROFF. DOCTOR FLACK IT'S THE SPIES HE PLANTED WITH VAN MORGAN! WHAT'S THE DELAY?
THE VIDEO TUBE BLEW OUT, BUT I'VE CHANGED IT
GOOD! YOU LOOK JUST LIKE THE REAL THINGS! MY PLAN IS DOUBLE FOLD - WE PUT THE SNATCH ON VAN MORGAN, AND STAR PIRATE GETS BLAMED
THERE! EVERYTHING'S OKAY! OLD AXEL! THOSE DISGUISES READY YET?
BOOM
VALDA, TELL ROFF THEY'RE IN THE CHAMBER AND THE REFLECTO IMAGE ALREADY REGISTERS. THEY'LL BE THERE IN A SEKO!
NOW, MISTER STAR PIRATE - YOU'LL RUE THE DAY YOU CROSSED MY PATH!

FANTHRILL
I..ER..CAN'T ACCEPT YOUR CREDITS, SIR I-I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE— I...
QUIT STALLING, VAN MORGAN— WHAT YOU'RE INTERESTED IN IS CONTROLLING THE RADIATION GEYSERS, AND.
SO, THAT'S IT! AHAH! THAT CRACK IN THE WALL.
AND LOOK! A BEAM-RAY PROJECTION— WITH THOSE TINY MOTES!
GREAT ZEUS! THE MOTES ARE TAKING SHAPE! IT'S PREPOSTEROUS!
CRACK!
SWIFTLY THE MOTES SWIRL AND SETTLE, AND SOON...
LINE UP! COME TOWARD THE BEAM-RAY VAN MORGAN! THIS IS A SNATCH! WHAT?
WELL, WELL, WELL! LOOK AT TH' LITTLE ANTS MADE UP! LIKE US! GONNA PUT TH' SNATCH ON OLD MONEY BAGS VAN MORGAN, EH? HAH!
AAWK!
BACK, BACK YOU FUZZ TUFTED BLAMM! I'LL GAFF 'EM IN WHO-YAH! AXEL!
THERE! I'VE TRAINED IT ON VAN MORGAN!! HE'S THE GUY WE WANT!
WHY, THAT RAY IT— IT'S DRAWING VAN MORGAN INTO THE BEAM! STOP HIM!

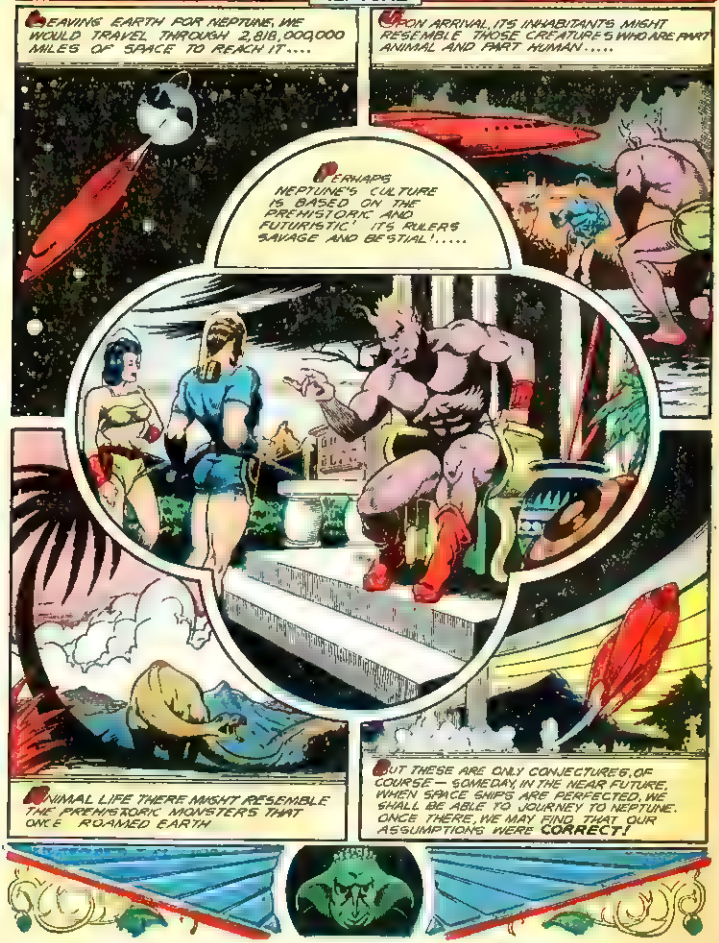

MORE POWER, PATTY! PULL - PULL IN THE ANTI-GRAVITY OR YOU'LL BE DRAWN IN!
I - I'M DOING MY BEST, HE! I'LL DO OUT OF REACH SOON. IT'S THAT BLUNDER STAR MASTER!
THE BOY NEEDS MORE MICO POWER - SAY AWAY!
YES, MY DEAR THERE I'VE SWITCHED IT ON TO FULL ENERGY!
AHAH THERE HE'S BACK IN ALL HE'S GETTING ANXIOUS, WELL CALL FLAKA FOR MORE MICO STRENGTH!
WA-OAH! WAAAAH! I'M THE POWER BOY!
NOW? NOTHING CAN RESIST THAT - NOTHING!
GROWING SMALLER - MY LEGS WEAKENING WELL!
THEY'RE IN WELL SIGNAL FLAKA TO REVERSE THE BEAM RAY!
ALMOST OUT OF MY NEW POWER I CAN'T HOLD YOU!
I'M BEING DRAWN IN

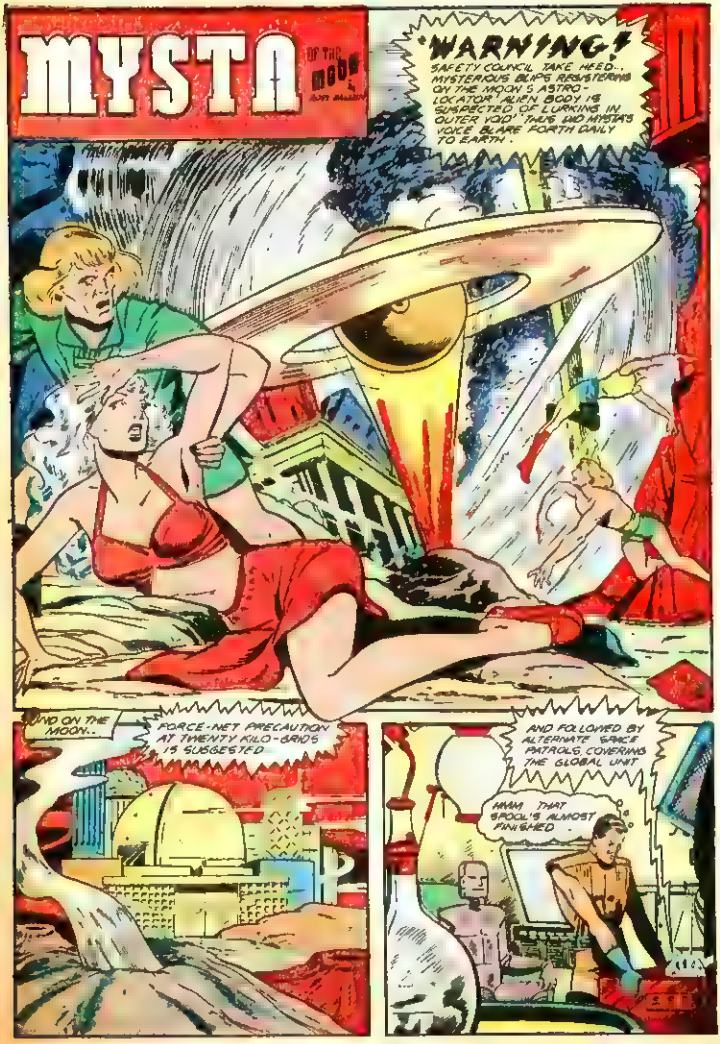

POOF! DISAPPEARED! TH WHOLE KABOODLE OF 'EM! AND I'M AS HELPLESS AS A ONE LEGGED CENTIPEDE!
WHILE..
HOLD YOUR BREATH, VALDA! SOMETHING'S HAPPENING — BUT I DON'T KNOW WHAT!
LOOK—LOOK! IT'S JUST A LOT OF FEET!
NO! THEY'RE TAKING SQUARE— WATCH OUT! HERE THEY COME!
AH! HERE'S MY BOYS AND OLD VAN MORGAN, AND— WAIT! IS THAT ANOTHER STAR PIRATE?
RIGHT, FLACK! AND HERE'S THE REAL STAR PIRATE! ZAP HIM— QUICK!
NO—NO FLACK, WAIT I—I . OOH!
SO, STAR PIRATE! LONG HAVE I WAITED THIS MOMENT— DIE! WHO'S THAT?
ME! AND IT'S A GOOD THING YOU FELL FOR MY GAG!
OH! I BLASTED THE WRONG ONE
REACH FOR THE PLANETS, CROOKS! WE'RE ALL GOING TO START FROM THE BEGINNING!
6

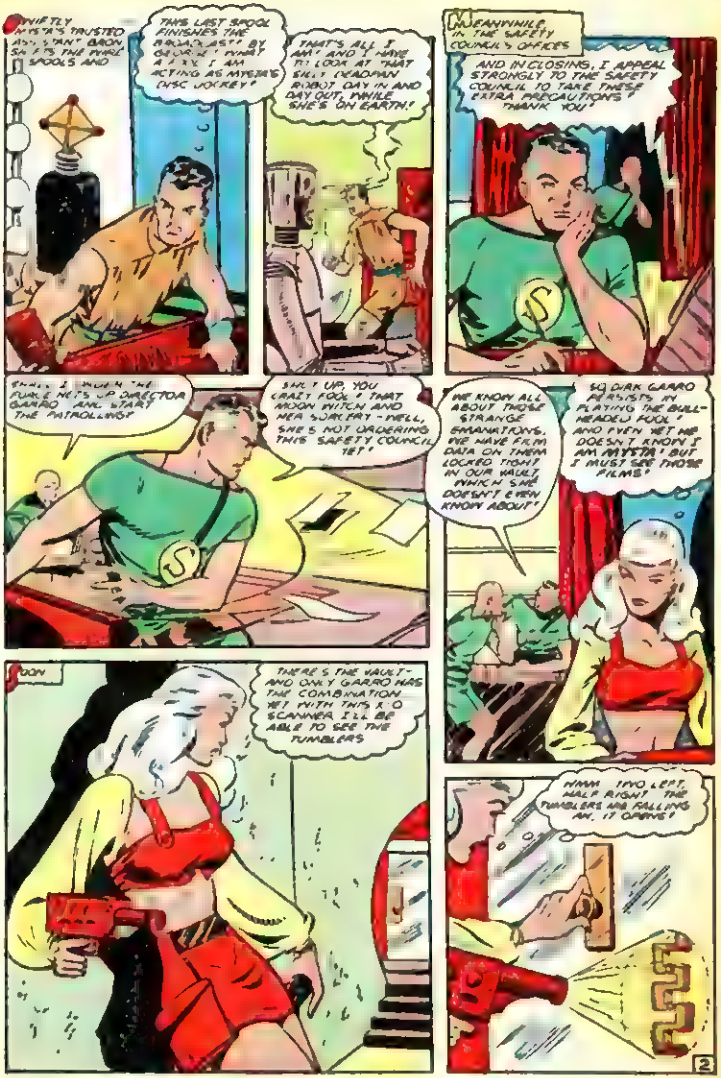
WELL, THERE YOU ARE, DIRECTOR ELNA. FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND CREDITS! WHAT'RE YOU GOING TO DO WITH ALL THAT TAFFY, HUH?
COME WITH ME -AND I'LL SHOW YOU!
A NEW VORTEX FOR THE PLASTO-TUBES THAT CARRY THE RADIO-ACTIVE FLUIDS!
AND NEW TENSO PLATES TO STRENGTHEN THE REFRACTO BULBS - OH, I SAVE MUST THANK EVERYONE!
TO YOU KIND, HUMANE GENTLEMEN I WISH TO SAY - THANK YOU, THANK YOU! EVERYONE OF YOU MUST HAVE A HEART OF GOLD!
GLOOM!
WELL, GENTLEMEN - YOU HEARD WHAT THE LADY SAID! WHERE ARE YOUR MANNERS?
WHY YOU RAT! YOU PUT THE SQUEEZE ON ME AND YOU KNOW IT!
YEAH! ME TOO, YOU - YOU
OKAY, CUT THE GRIPES! AND SING - ALL TOGETHER!
YOU'RE WELCOME, MISS -!
OH, STAR! ISN'T THAT WONDERFUL!
STAR PIRATE
IN EVERY ISSUE OF
PLANET COMICS!

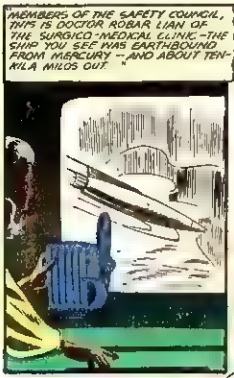
Life on other Worlds

NEPTUNE


LEAVING EARTH FOR NEPTUNE, WE WOULD TRAVEL THROUGH 2,818,000,000 MILES OF SPACE TO REACH IT....
UPON ARRIVAL, ITS INHABITANTS MIGHT RESEMBLE THOSE CREATURES WHO ARE PART ANIMAL AND PART HUMAN.....
PERHAPS NEPTUNE'S CULTURE IS BASED ON THE PREHISTORIC AND FUTURISTIC! ITS RULERS SAVAGE AND BESTIAL!.....
ANIMAL LIFE THERE MIGHT RESEMBLE THE PREHISTORIC MONSTERS THAT ONCE ROAMED EARTH
BUT THESE ARE ONLY CONJECTURES, OF COURSE — SOMEDAY, IN THE NEAR FUTURE, WHEN SPACE SHIPS ARE PERFECTED, WE SHALL BE ABLE TO JOURNEY TO NEPTUNE. ONCE THERE, WE MAY FIND THAT OUR ASSUMPTIONS WERE CORRECT!


MYSTA
OF THE
MOON
JOE MALEEV
WARNING!
SAFETY COUNCIL TAKE HEED.. MYSTERIOUS BLIPS REGISTERING ON THE MOON'S ASTRO-LOCATOR ALIEN BODY IS SUSPECTED OF LURKING IN OUTER VOID! THUS MYSTA'S VOICE BLARE FORTH DAILY TO EARTH.
AND ON THE MOON..
FORCE-NET PRECAUTION AT TWENTY KILO-GRIDS IS SUGGESTED
AND FOLLOWED BY ALTERNATE SPACE PATROLS COVERING THE GLOBAL UNIT
MMM THAT SPOOL'S ALMOST FINISHED


SWIFTLY MYRA'S TRUSTED ASSISTANT BARON SAFES THE SPOOLS AND
THE LAST SPOOL FINISHES THE BROADCAST BY GARRO! WHAT A JOKE! I AM ACTING AS MYRA'S DISC JOCKEY!
THAT'S ALL I AM! AND I HAVE TO LOOK AT THAT SILLY DEADPAN ROBOT DAY IN AND DAY OUT, WHILE SHE'S ON EARTH!
MEANWHILE, IN THE SAFETY COUNCIL'S OFFICES
AND IN CLOSING, I APPEAL STRONGLY TO THE SAFETY COUNCIL TO TAKE THESE EXTRA PRECAUTIONS! THANK YOU!
SHALL I SMASH THE PUNK? HE'S UP DIRECTOR GARRO AND START THE PATROLLING?
SAY! UP, YOU CRAZY FOOL! THAT MOON WITCH AND HER WORKERS - WELL, SHE'S NOT ORDERING THIS SAFETY COUNCIL YET!
WE KNOW ALL ABOUT THOSE STRANGE SMANATIONS, WE HAVE THEM DATA ON THEM LOCKED TIGHT IN OUR VAULT! ANYONE SAID DOESN'T EVEN KNOW ABOUT!
SO DARK GARRO APPEARS TO BE PLAYING THE BULL-HEADED FOOL! AND EVEN YET HE DOESN'T KNOW I AM MYRA! BUT I MUST SEE THOSE FILMS!
THERE'S THE VAULT - AND ONLY GARRO HAS THE COMBINATION YET WITH THIS X-O SCANNER I'LL BE ABLE TO SEE THE TUMBLERS
HMM! TWO LEFT, HALF RIGHT THE TUMBLERS ARE FALLING AN IT OPENS!
FLUT!
2


MEMBERS OF THE SAFETY COUNCIL, THIS IS DOCTOR ROBAR LIAN OF THE SURGICO-MEDICAL CLINIC -THE SHIP YOU SEE WAS EARTHBOUND FROM MERCURY -- AND ABOUT TEN-KILA MILES OUT

"AND AT THIS POINT, THE FILM BROKE OFF ALL CONTACT WAS LOST WITH THE SPACE SHIP FOR HOURS WE CAN ONLY THEORIZE THAT IT WAS PULLED FROM ITS NORMAL COURSE AND FLOUNDERED ABOUT IN THE VOID FOR SOME TIME BUT LATER, WHEN THE SHIP LANDED —— THE PASSENGER* LOOKED AND ACTED STRANGELY. IT WAS AT THE CLINIC THAT I MADE A STARTLING DISCOVERY!"

"THEN INSIDE THE SURGICO CLINIC IN THE SCIENCE TOWER, THE SCRATCHING SOUND OF STYLUS PENS, CHARTING ENDLESS GRAPHS ON GLOWING TELE-SCREENS, A DULL METALLIC VOICE RELAYING THE COORDINATES OF THE BLOODLESS, BONELESS CREATURES TO WEARY TECHNICIANS - THEN A BRIEF LULL IN THE ACTIVITY, AND

JUST THINK — MYSTA COULD DO ALL THIS WORK ALONE IN A FEW SECS. IT'S ODD DIRECTOR GARRO DOESN'T CALL HER IN.

THERE'S SOME RIVALRY BETWEEN THOSE TWO, PERHAPS. GARRO IS GIRL-SHY — SHE IS BEAUTIFUL, YOU KNOW.

BEAUTIFUL? OH YES, IF YOU CALL A COLD, MARBLE STATUE BEAUTIFUL!

SO! I SEE MY TRUE SELF IN THE EYES OF OTHERS, YET — WHAT! — THE VOCOLATOR REGISTERS.

TECHNICIAN 3A - TECHNICIAN 3A! REPORT IMMEDIATELY TO THE MAIN CLINIC!

THE VOICE OF DIRK GARRO — I WONDER WHY HE WANTS ME?

ALL TECHNICIANS ARE DISMISSED! SEND IN...OH, HERE SHE IS NOW!

YOU SENT FOR ME, DIRECTOR GARRO?

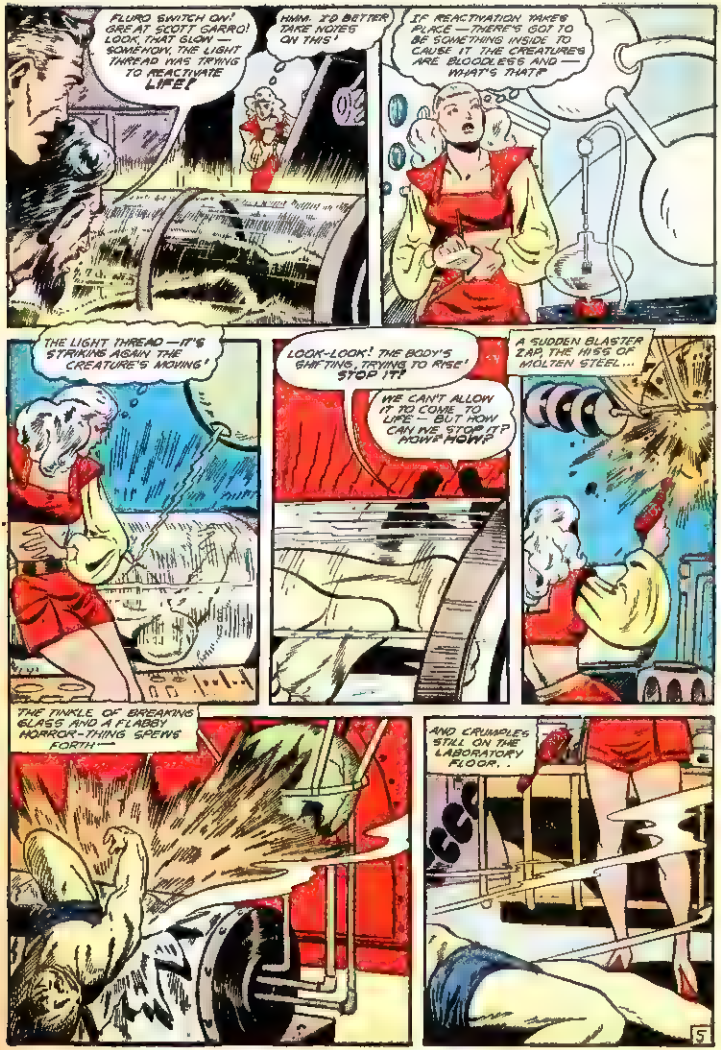
YES! YOU KNOW, YOU'RE JUST ONE TECHNICIAN IN THOUSANDS, YET EVERY TIME I LOOK AT YOU, YOUR FACE SEEMS VAGUELY FAMILIAR!

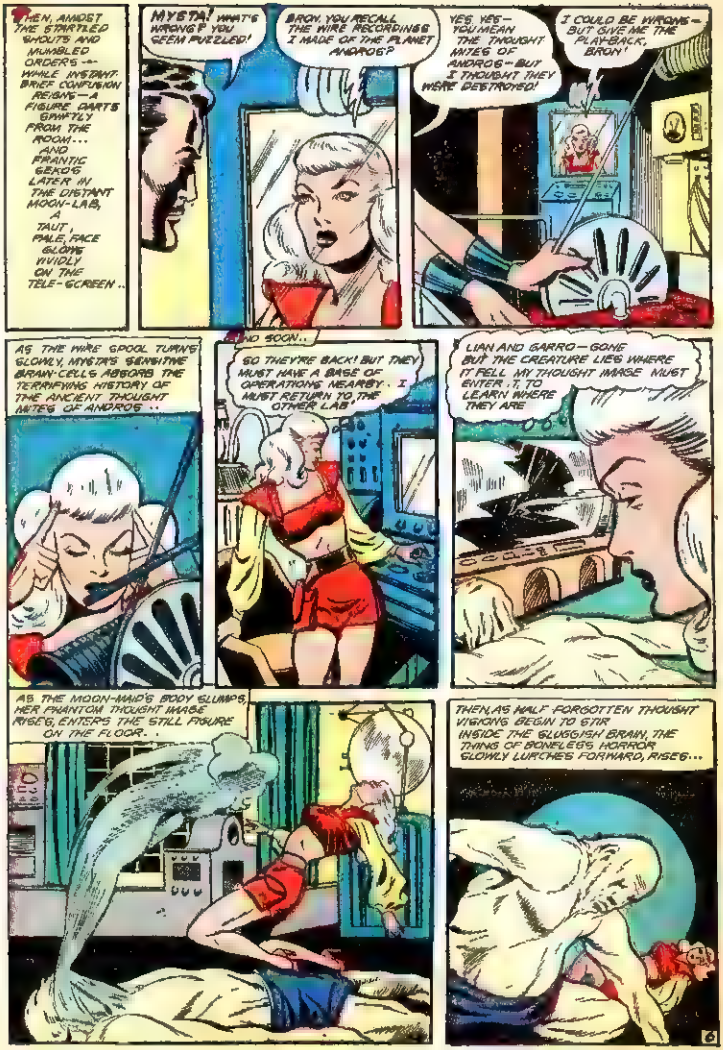
OH! I'M SURE YOU'RE MISTAKEN — OR PERHAPS YOU HAVE ME CONFUSED WITH A STATUE. LOOK! DOCTOR LIAN CALLS!

WHAT IN THE NAME OF — THAT STRANGE THREAD OF LIGHT! QUICKLY, GARRO, DO THINGS MOVING! WHAT SHALL WE DO?

CHECK INTERNAL REACTIONS, DOCTOR LIAN! GET THAT CREATURE UNDER A FLUORO SCREEN IMMEDIATELY!

OF COURSE! I SHOULD HAVE THOUGHT OF THAT! ATTENDANTS! MOVE THIS TUBE, QUICKLY!


FLURO SWITCH ON! GREAT SCOTT GARRO! LOOK, THAT GLOW — SOMEHOW, THE LIGHT THREAD WAS TRYING TO REACTIVATE LIFE!
HMM. I'D BETTER TAKE NOTES ON THIS!
IF REACTIVATION TAKES PLACE THERE'S GOT TO BE SOMETHING INSIDE TO CAUSE IT THE CREATURES ARE BLOODLESS AND — WHAT'S THAT?
THE LIGHT THREAD — IT'S STRIKING AGAIN THE CREATURE'S MOVING!
LOOK-LOOK! THE BODY'S SHIFTING, TRYING TO RISE! STOP IT!
WE CAN'T ALLOW IT TO COME TO LIFE — BUT HOW CAN WE STOP IT? HOW? HOW?
A SUDDEN BLASTER ZAP, THE HISS OF MOLTEN STEEL...
THE TINKLE OF BREAKING GLASS AND A FLABBY HORROR-THING SPEWS FORTH!
AND CRUMBLES STILL ON THE LABORATORY FLOOR..
5


THEN, AMIDST THE STARTLED SHOUTS AND MUMBLED ORDERS — WHILE INSTANT PANIC CONFUSION REIGNS — A FIGURE DARTS SWIFTLY FROM THE ROOM... AND FRANTIC SENSES LATER IN THE DISTANT MOON-LAB, A TAUT, PALE, FACE GLOWS WILDLY ON THE TELE-SCREEN..
MYSTA! WHAT'S WRONG? YOU SEEM PUZZLED!
BRON, YOU RECALL THE WIRE RECORDINGS I MADE OF THE PLANET ANDROG?
YES, YES — YOU MEAN THE THOUGHT MATES OF ANDROG — BUT I THOUGHT THEY WERE DESTROYED!
I COULD BE WRONG — BUT GIVE ME THE PLAY-BACK, BRON!
AS THE WIRE SPOOL TURNS SLOWLY, MYSTA'S SENSITIVE BRAIN-CELLS ABSORB THE TERRIFYING HISTORY OF THE ANCIENT THOUGHT MATES OF ANDROG..
AND SOON..
SO THEY'RE BACK! BUT THEY MUST HAVE A BASE OF OPERATIONS NEARBY. I MUST RETURN TO THE OTHER LAB.
LIAN AND GARRO — GONE BUT THE CREATURE LIES WHERE IT FELL MY THOUGHT IMAGE MUST ENTER.. TO LEARN WHERE THEY ARE
AS THE MOON-MAID'S BODY SLUMPS, HER PHANTOM THOUGHT IMAGE RISES, ENTERS THE STILL FIGURE ON THE FLOOR..
THEN, AS HALF FORGOTTEN THOUGHT VISIONS BEGIN TO STIR INSIDE THE SLUGGISH BRAIN, THE THING OF BONELESS HORROR SLOWLY LURCHES FORWARD, RISES...
6

AND NOW AS THE THOUGHT VISIONS GROW CLEARER, TRANSCENDING SPACIAL DISTANCES, A HUGE OBJECT LOOMS IN THE ETERNAL VOID DUSK — AND VOCO-IMPULSES CRACKLE SHARPLY...

DANGER!

"REACTIVATING PROCESS OF HUMANOIDS" HAS CEASED!

ALL CONNECTIONS WITH SURGICO-CLINIC OUT!

BEGIN GYRO-DISK!

YET TO DESTRUCTO-WHIRL! MUST RETRIEVE HUMANOIDS!

AND SOON!

ALERT! ALERT! PEOPLE OF TERRA, TAKE SHELTER! EVACUATE ALL BUILDINGS! A STRANGE BODY IS HURTLING TOWARD EARTH!

THEN, AS TERROR-VISIONS FADE THE GHOST LIKE THOUGHT IMAGE RETURNS FROM WHENCE IT CAME

LATER

THERE, I'VE MADE THE CULTURE THAT SHOULD DO THE WORK! WHAT?

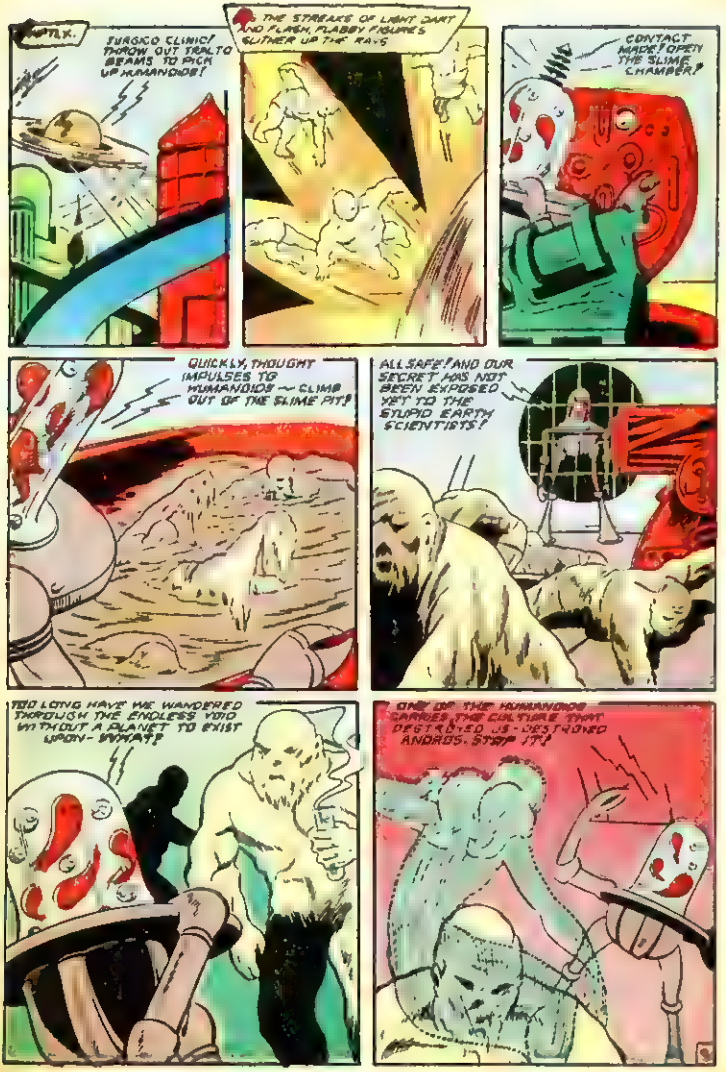
THE THING'S WOBBLING ON ITS LEGS. MY THOUGHT IMAGE MUST HAVE STIMULATED IT. I MUST ENTER IT AGAIN!

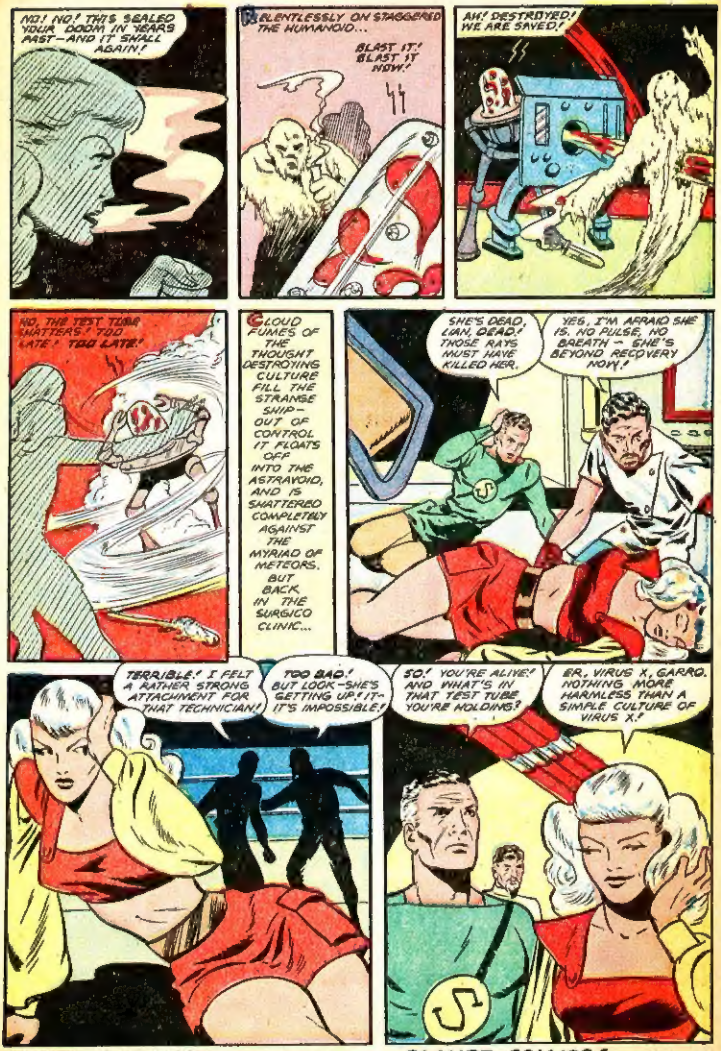
AND HOW ONCE MORE DOES THE THOUGHT TRANSFER TAKE PLACE...

AND THROUGH THE EERIE GLOOM STAGGERS THE HUMANOID CLUTCHING THE TEST TUBE...

WHILE OUTSIDE, TERROR-MAD SHOUTS RING TO THE AMAZED RHYTHM OF POUNDING, SCUFFLING FEET—SEEKING ESCAPE FROM THE TERRIBLE ONSLAUGHT OF THE INVADING DOOM, PLUNGING EVER DOWN...

SET GYRO TO MAXIMUM-SHATTER SPEED! BUILDING TOWER AHEAD! SMASH IT! SMASH IT!


SURGICO CLINIC! THROW OUT TRACTO BEAMS TO PICK UP HUMANOIDS!
AS THE STREAKS OF LIGHT DART AND FLASH, FLABBY FIGURES GLITTER UP THE RAYS
CONTACT MADE! OPEN THE SLIME CHAMBER!
QUICKLY, THOUGHT IMPULSES TO HUMANOIDS — CLIMB OUT OF THE SLIME PIT!
ALL SAFE! AND OUR SECRET HAS NOT BEEN EXPOSED YET TO THE STUPID EARTH SCIENTISTS!
TOO LONG HAVE WE WANDERED THROUGH THE ENDLESS VOID WITHOUT A PLANET TO EXIST UPON- WHAT?
ONE OF THE HUMANOIDS CARRIES THE CULTURE THAT DESTROYED US - DESTROYED ANDROS. STOP IT!


NO! NO! THIS SEALED YOUR DOOM IN YEARS PAST—AND IT SHALL AGAIN!
RELENTLESSLY ON STAGGERED THE HUMANOID...
BLAST IT! BLAST IT NOW!
AH! DESTROYED! WE ARE SAVED!
NO, THE TEST TUBE SHATTERS? TOO LATE! TOO LATE!
CLOUD FUMES OF THE THOUGHT DESTROYING CULTURE FILL THE STRANGE SHIP— OUT OF CONTROL IT FLOATS OFF INTO THE ASTRAVOID, AND IS SHATTERED COMPLETELY AGAINST THE MYRIAD OF METEORS. BUT BACK IN THE SURGICO CLINIC...
SHE'S DEAD, LAN, DEAD! THOSE RAYS MUST HAVE KILLED HER.
YES, I'M AFRAID SHE IS. NO PULSE, NO BREATH— SHE'S BEYOND RECOVERY NOW!
TERRIBLE! I FELT A RATHER STRONG ATTACHMENT FOR THAT TECHNICIAN!
TOO BAD! BUT LOOK—SHE'S GETTING UP! IT— IT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
SO! YOU'RE ALIVE! AND WHAT'S IN THAT TEST TUBE YOU'RE HOLDING?
ER, VIRUS X, GARRO. NOTHING MORE HARMLESS THAN A SIMPLE CULTURE OF VIRUS X!

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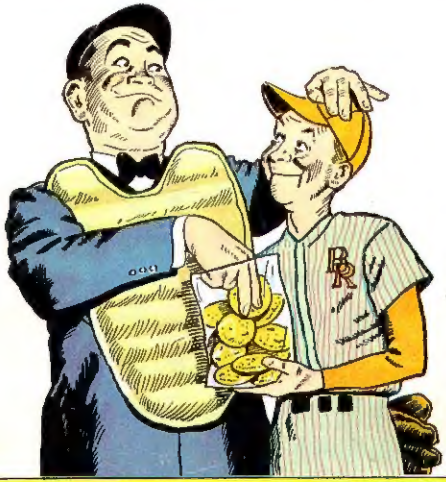

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